

ARKADY PLOTNITSKY

I N T H E



S H A D O W O F

H E G E L

COMPLEMENTARITY,  
HISTORY, AND  
THE UNCONSCIOUS

**ARKADY PLOTNITSKY**

**IN THE SHADOW OF**

**WHEEL  
WHEEL**

*Complementarity,*

*History,*

*and the*

*Unconscious*

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*For M.*



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. . . the complementary nature of the  
description appearing in this uncertainty  
is unavoidable already in an analysis of  
the most elementary concepts employed  
in interpreting experience.

—Niels Bohr

## **PREFACE**

The present study proceeds along three principal lines of inquiry:

*First*, it is concerned with understanding the question of history operating against, although in the shadow of, Hegel's thinking and the Hegelian logic of history and consciousness—the logic that defines history as the development and unfolding of the Absolute and Absolutely Self-Conscious Spirit, *Geist*.

*Second*, the book offers a general theoretical framework enabling the understanding of history it develops, but with much larger implications. This framework is introduced in the wake of recent, specifically post-structuralist, developments in modern critical theory and intellectual history, following Nietzsche, the grand thinker of the unconscious and possibly still the case of the most radical excess of Hegelian thinking ever. It is specifically constructed, however, under the general heading of complementarity—a conceptual matrix drawn from Niels Bohr's interpretation of quantum mechanics and conjoined by the present study with the matrix of general economy as developed, via Nietzsche and Freud, in the work of Georges Bataille and Jacques Derrida. A general economy becomes necessary once the unconscious enters a given theoretical field; but

a general economy also, necessarily, transforms the concept of the unconscious itself. The framework developed by the present study equally transforms both concepts—history and the unconscious—in part by relating them to each other by means of general economy and complementarity.

*Third*, the book also explores the role of quantum mechanics and several other recent developments in mathematics and science in modern intellectual history, particularly along the axis of the unconscious and general economy, from Nietzsche to Freud to Bataille to Lacan to Deleuze to Derrida.

The principle and then the matrix of complementarity were developed by Bohr in order to account for the indeterminacy of quantum systems and to describe—jointly, but without classical synthesis—their conflicting aspects. In Bohr's interpretation such aspects become *complementary* features—features that are mutually exclusive, but equally necessary for a comprehensive description and analysis of all quantum processes. Complementarity was the basis of Bohr's great debate with Einstein; and Bohr's theory and, more generally, the developments in physics that led him to complementarity have had an enormous impact on modern intellectual history, affecting many developments outside the field of the natural and exact sciences, including those at issue in the present study and particularly the idea of general economy.

General economy, as understood by Bataille, relates the configurations it considers to the loss of meaning—a loss that it regards as ineluctable within any given system. According to Bataille, “the *general economy* . . . makes apparent that *excesses of energy are produced, which, by definition, cannot be utilized. The excessive energy can only be lost without the slightest aim, consequently without any meaning.*” General economy and its practice—in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida—are juxtaposed to classical theories or *restricted economies*, and specifically to Hegel's system of philosophy. Such classical theories configure their objects and the relationships between those objects as always meaningful, and they deal with systems that are claimed to avoid the unproductive expenditure of energy and to contain multiplicity and indeterminacy. General economy exposes all such claims as finally untenable.

Under the rubric of complementarity, the present study joins both ideas—general economy and complementarity—within a comprehensive

historico-theoretical framework. Complementarity so conceived is a profoundly, fundamentally anti-Hegelian matrix, even though, and in part because, it does not escape the shadow or penumbra of Hegel. It is quite possible that even the most radical departures from Hegel and transformations of concepts, such as history, cannot escape, if not Hegel himself, at least his shadow or the (en)closure of Hegelianism—the far-reaching influence of his ideas, logic, strategies, and project-building. These ideas, logic, and strategies help to make *Geist* possible or necessary for Hegel, but they cannot be contained by the logic of *Geist* alone. Their operation in Hegel and elsewhere makes possible many other things, some still subject to Hegelian constraints, others leaving these constraints, or at least some of them—such as, finally impossible and unnecessary, *Geist*—behind. A transformation of and departure from Hegel may, then, not be effective or even possible, if attempted by simply renouncing Hegel altogether, without a rigorous analysis and discrimination of manifold elements and dimensions of his logic. In this sense, a radical—fundamental and far-reaching—departure from Hegel or other classical theories may not be a total or absolute departure, although the degree of proximity to and distance from Hegel and philosophy does count and is a crucial issue for the present study. In general, a radical critique of Hegel demands a radical suspension of all absolutes, positive and negative alike; and Hegel profoundly understood the complicity between them. We must therefore continue and extend Hegel while departing from him, by using means both available within the Hegelian (en)closure and found elsewhere. Our understanding of history is tied to this joint process of extension-continuity with and departure from Hegel's ideas.

While several other developments and figures such as Marx, Freud, Heidegger, Lacan, and Althusser will be discussed, this study focuses particularly on Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida. Their texts will be read together—against, but in the shadow of, Hegel—by means of a kind of parallel processing of Hegel and post-Nietzschean theory via complementarity.

I borrow the latter metaphor from modern, or postmodern, computer technology, where the term 'parallel processing' refers to the systems—software and hardware—that allow one to process multiple data and solve many problems simultaneously. Such data and problems may or may not be related to each other; and systems of that type are designed

primarily to solve the problems arising in processing heterogeneous information and tasks. But such systems also allow one to solve mathematical problems whose complexity makes their sequential processing impossible and demands multilinear arrangements of the data and procedures involved. In the present context, 'parallel processing' refers to the concurrent consideration of concepts, metaphors, or whole conceptual and metaphoric frameworks. Whether a theoretical or historical processing is at issue, such a multiple parallel processing is, I shall argue, always necessary under the joint conditions of general economy and complementarity. The metaphor itself is consonant with complementarity in the expanded sense of the present study. In fact, complementarity as understood here refers to the multiple parallel interactions and engagements of concepts, metaphors, or frameworks; and this complementary economy extends to the very mode of analysis undertaken here.

In part, this mode of analysis is a response to the limitations of solely historical or solely theoretical analysis. Instead, both types of analysis must be employed complementarily. It also responds, however, to a broader array of constraints and uses a broader array of complementarities. One of the great lessons of poststructuralist or postmodernist theory and textual practice, and of their persistent interpenetration, is that it may no longer be possible to carry on certain arguments by traditional, linear means. Yet traditional means cannot be simply dismissed or suspended, either, and we should not bypass the possibilities that they still yield. These possibilities can in fact be utilized more than ever through a general economic and complementary analysis. The economy, the *general* economy, of this utilization will, however, be quite different from the *restricted* economy of Hegelian synthesis.

Complementarity entails a multidimensional and complementary style, a multiple parallel processing, which has been incorporated as much as possible into the book's structure and lines of argument. The book is divided into several areas of special focus: Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7 offer a general theoretical discussion, while Chapters 4 to 6 are devoted more specifically to the analysis of Hegel. These areas, however, continuously overlap and interpenetrate each other. They are complementary within and among themselves. Conversely, or again complementarily, Hegel and his shadow pervade all theoretical discussions and readings of the book. One cannot not read Hegel, even if one only deals—and can one do



otherwise?—with shadows of shadows and spirits of spirits—ghosts of ghosts, *Geister der Geister*—who, like philosophy itself, according to Hegel, spread their wings at dusk.

Pervasive throughout much of modern intellectual history, Hegel's impact is felt particularly powerfully whenever the question of history is taken up—the question of the definition, understanding, and theory of history; the functioning and the very possibility of the term and concept of history; or the question of practice, for example, the political practice, of history. Ever since the appearance of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in 1807, Hegel has shaped, or at the very least overshadowed, the history of the question of history, although of course the achievement and impact of the *Phenomenology* and Hegel far exceed the problematics of history. This history has staged itself as a drama with a tremendous cast of characters, from Hegel's contemporaries, such as Schelling, who appears on this scene both before and after Hegel, to Marx and Nietzsche, and on into the twentieth century and current intellectual history—to Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Lacan, Deleuze, and Derrida.

The figures most crucial to this study—Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida—have often been seen more as thinkers of the unconscious than of history. While the relative roles of and the relationships between history and the unconscious in each of these authors are complex issues reflecting the reception and understanding of their theories and attitudes toward history, the emphasis on the unconscious in their works is undeniable. For this reason, they are positioned *against* Hegel as the thinker of history and—and *as*—consciousness—of historical *consciousness* and of *historical* consciousness—on the one hand, and as the thinker opposed to the unconscious, on the other.

Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida, however, do have fundamental historical concerns. In fact, even though their work has not been associated with the question of history, at least not until recently, they may be considered to be as historical in their thinking as Hegel—in the end, even more so—given the complex nature of their understanding of history and the radical transformation of classical ideas concerning history found in their writings. These writings have had crucial implications for our understanding of history, leading to the conjunction or the *complementarity* of history and the unconscious; a complementarity that becomes necessary under the conditions of general economy defining the analytical

matrix of this study. The resulting economy is, on the one hand, fundamentally historical, even though and indeed because, along with any unique determination, it prohibits all absolute or unconditional historicity—a fully historical determination of any given process or configuration. On the other hand, it is fundamentally and radically anti-Hegelian, if, and again in part because, it carries some Hegelian shadows, penumbras, and chiaroscuros along.

While and to the extent that an account of new theories, such as the one undertaken by this study, may be seen as a *history*, it can in turn be a history—one of many possible histories; and this historical perspectivization, to use a Nietzschean term, obviously applies to the present analysis as well, even though it does not aim to offer a strictly historical account. Historical localizations and perspectivizations are part of the general economy of perspectivization affecting analysis or description—whether historical, theoretical, or other—and often forcing one to employ different modes jointly or complementarily.

In a general economy, this localization is structural—irreducible. It cannot be avoided. Under the conditions of general economy one can only speak of local configurations, whether historical, political, theoretical, interpretive, or still other. But, by the same token, this structural localization cannot be absolute. In a general economy, there can no more be absolutely local—fully and unconditionally localized—than absolutely global—fully and unconditionally totalized—configurations. The locality of local configurations can never be fully contained—fully demarcated, framed, or contextualized—any more than an all-encompassing total economy can be produced. Local configurations can and often must be extended in the course of a given analysis, in the first place, because any analysis is bound to enter some histories or extended historical trajectories. Any historical perspective is irreducibly local only in the sense that one can never claim, or rather rigorously sustain a claim of, a unified historical perspective or an unconditionally privileged historical position. But one can extend such locality to very broad historical intervals or, of course, conversely, further localize it. Such extensions or further localizations, however, can only follow one given historical trajectory or a conglomerate of trajectories among other potential historical extensions. Beyond allowing alternative historical positions and perspectives at any point, such other—unconscious, as it were—histories always affect and often produce

a given historical perspective without being the subject of, or otherwise explicitly represented in, a given analysis. Under these conditions, however, one would be equally prohibited from *postulating*, even locally, a full—locally total—history, whether conceived of as representable or unrepresentable in its fullness; or from postulating any other form of containment of a given configuration by means of a historical determination. To do so would be to repeat an absolute, Hegelian economy of a historical whole at the local level. The conditions of general economy thus equally prohibit absolute unities and absolute fragmentations, and thus any form of full, loss-free, historical representation.

The present analysis also produces or implies *a* history or several histories on its margins, and it may be seen as a *historical* analysis, responding to the limits and limitations of historical analysis, which will be considered in Chapter 7. The book offers a *complementary* historico-theoretical analysis responsive to the respective limits of historical and theoretical analysis. It also has to rely on what the history under examination here has produced: theories and critiques of history, consciousness, the unconscious, and many other ideas and frameworks. By virtue of the very general economic conditions at issue in the present analysis, one can, however, employ or relate to only a relatively small portion of such a historical ensemble. Many other theories participate in the history at issue and make this history possible; and along with a formidable array of other ideas, these theories affect the transformation of our ideas about history. These developments, as heterogeneous as they have been massive, certainly cannot be reduced to the names mentioned thus far. Thus, Lacan, for example, obviously has a crucial significance for the questions at issue here and would merit much more space than the present study is able to offer to him. His role is central, first, in view of both his debt to and his radical subversion of Hegel, particularly of the dialectic of desire that opens Hegel's analysis of self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology*, and second, in view of his profound insights into the problematics of the unconscious, where he anticipates much of Derrida. In the course of the analysis to follow many other names will inevitably appear. Still others will be forgotten, repressed, or deliberately omitted, or will remain unknown and unperceived. Along with many other indeterminacies, there is always, in any text, an indeterminacy of names, lost and found, overtly used—promoted or denigrated, or both at once—names that will surface

in one form or another, in spite of one's designs and desires, or that will be lost forever. This indeterminacy of names is itself an ineluctable effect of the processes at issue in this study. In order to understand them one needs both general economy and complementarity.

Chapters 1 and 2 explore the conjunction of complementarity and general economy. Along with considering the genealogy of complementarity in Bohr's interpretation of quantum mechanics, on the one hand, and of the general economic theories of Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida, on the other, I analyze the complementary relations between these two fields and, by implication, between modern science and intellectual history in general.

Preparing for and anticipating subsequent analysis, I also consider in this part of the book several crucial applications of complementarity to the question of history and the question of theoretical transformations. The economy of theoretical transformation—"the structure of scientific revolutions"—is itself a major case, anticipating the general matrix of history to be developed against and in the shadow of Hegel in the remaining part of the book, particularly in Chapter 7. The relationships and complementarity between continuous and discontinuous models of historical transformations acquire a particular significance in this context and are considered extensively. The question of these relationships affects all the major texts treated in this study, in particular, Hegel's economy of history and consciousness and the complementary models of quantum physics. I also discuss several major developments in modern physics involving the idea and metaphor of complementarity and Gödel's theories of incompleteness and undecidability, specifically in the context of the relationships between complementarity and deconstruction.

The exposition of these chapters is determined first by the provenance of the concept and principle of complementarity, as formulated by Bohr, although other links, including Nietzsche, are pertinent; and second, by the fact that these ideas of modern science are a crucial part of the historico-theoretical ensemble undermining Hegel and Hegelianism.

The analysis refers to relevant works, especially Bohr's, in the fields of physics and the history of science, and it draws on the historical, theoretical, and metaphorical potential of these fields. My aim, however, is also, indeed mainly, to present these scientific theories *in terms of the present*

*study*, by engaging Nietzsche, Bataille, Derrida and deconstruction, and several other related frameworks and frames of reference. The analysis is designed to explore the possibilities that complementarity offers in these terms and these fields, even though I also want to show that modern mathematics and science are conceptually and metaphorically rich enough to permit more rigorous and productive interactions with contemporary critical theory than has been customary. Reciprocity or complementarity already exists through the mutual influences of the exact sciences and philosophy—or rather a complex manifold of fields multiply divided or united, within and without. Indeed, the history of philosophy and intellectual history in general have had as powerful an influence upon modern science as, from Galileo and Newton to twentieth-century science, scientific thinking has had upon them. While engaging the relevant concepts and metaphors as rigorously as possible, however, we must also rigorously respect the differences between different fields, specifically but not exclusively as concerns the mathematical formalism and experimental technologies on which modern science relies.

Chapter 1, “Matrices,” outlines the basic contours of history, general economy, and complementarity in the context of the present study.

Chapter 2, “Connectivities,” considers interactive, or complementary, genealogies of complementary modes of thinking and analysis inside and outside mathematics and science, most specifically some of Georg Friedrich Bernhard Riemann’s ideas and their role in the genesis of complementarity in Bohr and elsewhere, particularly in Deleuze and Guattari. I then discuss Hegel’s place in the history of complementary modes of analysis and the relationships between complementarity and self-consciousness in Bohr. The final section of the chapter considers the economy of theoretical transformations or the structure of scientific revolutions.

Chapter 3, “Landscapes,” serves as a broad entrance to the part of the book devoted to Hegel. By means of a collocation of Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, Derrida, and several other authors, this chapter offers a kind of historical and theoretical landscape around Hegel and his shadow—his many shadows and chiaroscuros.

Chapters 4 to 6 then consider the place of Hegel’s central concepts—such as Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Mediation, History, Knowledge, Science, and Philosophy—in the historical and theoretical field

demarcated by the preceding discussion, in the shadow of but nevertheless *against* Hegel. These concepts define the Hegelian *Geist* as an always historical and always conscious process—the historical consciousness.

The goal of this exploration is thus not an interpretation of Hegel, or even fully of his concepts as just listed. Nor is it a *reading* or, let us say, a *textualization* in the deconstructive or postdeconstructive sense. The latter, broadly speaking, connotes an exploration of the differential space *between* interpretations; and according to all major poststructuralist understandings of reading, for example, Derrida's and Paul de Man's, all our readings and interpretations alike are always—always already—between interpretations. The term 'interpretation' would then apply to more stable, classical configurations such as the meaning or the signified content of a text. Reading or textualization is, I think, a project preferable to interpretation, often having produced more rigorous and more productive readings and interpretations than readings *as* interpretations, although, to one degree or another, no *reading* or textualization can avoid interpretation, either. The main concern of the present study, however, is the *theoretical* possibilities—and impossibilities—offered by Hegel's *text*, within the historico-theoretical ensemble presented here, in relation to our understanding of history by way of the unconscious and to the thematics of complementarity.

Specifically, this analysis will be concerned with the two principal Hegelian themes and their interaction:

1. the conjunction of history and consciousness, and particularly self-consciousness;
2. the economy of continuity, or the continuum, as the basis of all history and historicity, also of all consciousness and, particularly, self-consciousness in Hegel.

Taking some of the major and best-known moments of Hegel's text as a point of departure, I argue as to what is still possible or indeed necessary and what is no longer possible or has become unnecessary along these lines, and also how one can think in terms of and write history or about history, given the transformations of the modern intellectual and political landscape surveyed.

In this sense, my goal is not primarily to give a new understanding of Hegel and his concepts, even though some new points may well develop.

In a way, *some* “old” understanding may still be at issue and cannot be discounted, no matter how much “new” understanding has emerged through new readings and even interpretations of Hegel, particularly but not exclusively in the wake of deconstruction.

The temptation to reread Hegel and (re)make him into Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Lacan, Derrida, or several other figures that may be mentioned here is great; and even leaving aside their unquestionable debt to Hegel, Hegel has indeed much to offer by way of proximity to all these thinkers. The most careful discrimination is in order, however; and one must equally respect and account for both differences *and* proximities between Hegel and these figures, and among these figures themselves. Transformational—or, to add a perhaps most pertinent older name to the list, Heraclitean—as it is, the Hegelian economy should not be identified with the theoretical economies of any among the figures just mentioned; and both in historical and theoretical terms, exploring differences among them may prove more productive than locating proximities.

Accordingly, the analysis to follow will attempt to explore and utilize both proximities to and differences from Hegel. Thus, in particular, the conjunctions of history and consciousness, or of history and philosophy, are brought into the foreground in order to explore, on the one hand—both at a certain distance and a certain proximity to Hegel—a complementarity of history and theory, and on the other—now more radically *against* Hegel and through Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida—a complementarity of history and the unconscious.

To take a stance closer to Nietzsche than to Derrida and deconstruction, it may be better and perhaps necessary to suspend “Hegel” as radically as possible and to try to develop a profoundly anti-Hegelian understanding of history. It is also necessary, of course, to make sure that Hegel is indeed suspended or transformed as a result, or that such a suspension has not already been enacted or made problematic by Hegel himself. In short, a suspension of or departure from Hegel, or other classical theories, must be rigorous. Our analysis must respect the textual and theoretical constraints, however much such constraints are transformed by new theories or in the very process of a given reading or encounter; and we cannot dispense, at least for now, with many classical, including specifically Hegelian, constraints. To enact such a rigorous departure is not easy, as Derrida and several other readers, in both classical

and deconstructive modes, persuasively argue. Nietzsche succeeds, however; and at this point of history, one is armed against Hegel and these problems with Nietzsche, Bataille, Derrida and deconstruction, together with other theories of history and readings of Hegel. While no departure of that type can be absolute or unconditional, the degree of transformation and differences in this respect, for example, between Nietzsche and Derrida, cannot be disregarded, either; and they may in fact be decisive.

While this study does depend on commentary and scholarship on Hegel and on other major figures it considers, and will refer to some of it whenever necessary, such sources will not be engaged as actively as I might wish. The scholarship and commentary on Hegel is immense, of course, whether Anglo-American or Continental and whether one thinks along the lines of interpretation or, by now, along the lines of deconstruction and textualization or reading as just indicated, to which the present view of Hegel is most indebted and remains the closest—particularly to Derrida, Bataille, and Nietzsche.

In this sense, the present book, even in its discussion of Hegel, while not strictly a project of reading or commentary, is as much a reading of Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida as of Hegel, so that all four are engaged in a kind of parallel processing. Naturally, like any other text, Hegel's text cannot exist outside a reading or interpretation, although it can never exist fully inside one, either. Consequently, I engage in a certain amount of reading and interpretation of key Hegelian concepts, and make claims that may at times be affirmative but never absolute. Not even Hegel makes such claims: he leaves them to the Absolute, such as Absolute *Geist* or Absolute Knowledge. The claims of this study concern both Hegel's *concepts*, which, it is true, resist definite and at times even relatively stable claims, and Hegel's own *claims*, which, while requiring careful sorting out, remain more stable and determined than his concepts.

The *Phenomenology* is the text most often referred to, although I relate the main points to Hegel's later works as well. The later works, from the first or greater *Logic* to the *Encyclopedia* and the lecture on the philosophy of history—with related moments in others of his late lectures or, in more political terms, in the *Philosophy of Rights*—contain some important nuances and transformations of the *Phenomenology*, which I shall indicate as the analysis progresses. The first *Logic*, in fact, somewhat overshadows several of the major topics covered by the present study,



particularly the question of the continuum. It does so from a certain distance, as it were, but thus perhaps casts a longer shadow. The analysis of even its major concepts, which have a fascinating specificity in Hegel's corpus, let alone a reading of it, would easily take another book—a very long book. I do agree, however, with those who think that the *Phenomenology* remains Hegel's most important and ground-breaking work and that throughout his writing Hegel remains in the shadow of the *Phenomenology*—Hegel in the shadow of Hegel, cast from behind. In addition, this study concerns itself mainly with *how* Hegel, and we, can—and no longer can—think about or in terms of history and consciousness, and the unconscious. No other book of Hegel's is, I think, more interesting and revealing in this sense than the *Phenomenology*, which establishes the logic of all Hegel's "logics," whether one speaks of Hegel's procedures or various books and texts under this title. Naturally the *Logic*, and indeed both *Logics*, the second being part one of the *Encyclopedia*, suggest many crucial points as well.

In the *Phenomenology*, the process culminates in Absolute Knowledge as simultaneously both absolute self-consciousness and absolute *presence*, and *history*, *mediation*, *becoming*, outlined in broad terms and, given the present subject, mostly along the axis of the question of history, as explored in Chapter 4, "Mediation, History, and Self-Consciousness." It suggests a kind of matrix of Hegel and Hegelianism as the unity, as opposed to the complementarity, of history and consciousness, and finally self-consciousness. In order to arrive at a general economy of history, one needs instead the complementarity, not unity, of history and the unconscious, along with a general economic theory of materiality, *conceived via complementarity*, as opposed to Hegel's idealism, however complex the latter determination might be in Hegel. While the unity of history and consciousness in turn exhibits great complexity in Hegel, the conjunction itself enacted by way of unity, synthesis, dialectic, *Aufhebung*—the triple economy of negating, conserving, and superseding, suggested by the multiple meaning of the German word itself—must be seen as defining Hegel's matrix and many other Hegelianisms.

This claim appears to be well supported both by textual analysis and by the best interpretations and readings of Hegel, whether along classical or deconstructive lines. I shall call this joint economy of *presence* and *becoming*—the "continuum"; and in relation to Absolute Knowledge

and other utopian models of that type, I shall speak of the “continuum utopia.” In choosing the name “continuum,” I follow Bataille, who uses the term; Althusser on the “homogeneity of historical time” in Hegel; and Derrida on “presence” and “the line,” “*ousia* and *grammē*.”

The model itself is considered in Chapter 5, “Continuums.” It is discussed there in relation to the question of temporality in Hegel, his major precursors, most particularly Rousseau, and several major critics of classical temporality—Heidegger, Bataille, Althusser, Derrida, and de Man.

Chapter 6, “The Whole and Its Parts,” discusses the question of self-consciousness, which, interactively with the continuum, defines the Hegelian economy as the speculative philosophy of history. The main argument in this chapter is the necessity of a radical, general economic, deconstruction and complementarization of all self-consciousness and all reflexivity in general—of all “self.” Under the conditions of general economy and complementarity, nothing can become self-identical, self-contained, self-enclosed, or constitute a whole—a “self”—either in being or becoming, conscious or unconscious, Hegelian, Marxist, Freudian, Heideggerian, or other.

In the concluding chapter, Chapter 7, “History as Complementarity,” the *unconscious* historicity or *historical* unconsciousness or, in terms of the present study, a complementarity of history and the unconscious, emerging in the margins of the preceding analysis, takes center stage. The chapter also provides a technical account of the specific conceptual structures of the complementary economy of history. The first section, on “History in Freud and Nietzsche,” examines Nietzsche’s “attitudes towards history.” Freud’s global conceptions of history are considered along the way. As *global* conceptions, they ultimately emerge as Hegelian—a Hegelian unity, rather than a complementarity, of history and the unconscious. Freud’s global economy of history in fact represses a more general economic and complementary engagement of history and the unconscious suggested by his local economies of memory and psychological processes, particularly as retextualized by Derrida’s reading of Freud. Reversing Hegel, Freud offers the Hegelian history as *the unconscious*, which he should not have done, given the *economy* of the unconscious he had inscribed elsewhere. If Hegel or Marx are much better on history than on the unconscious, the *Hegelian* Freud—*after* Hegel, *after* Marx, *after* Nietzsche—is much better on the unconscious than on his

tory. Freud's economy of the unconscious figures a local history or local historicity that undermines all Hegelian historicity, global and local alike, including in Freud himself. Freud cannot have both "Freud" and "Hegel," as he wants. He needs a special effort *undermining* his own local economy of the unconscious in order to arrive at or to *return* to Hegel.

The technical apparatus of Chapter 7, presented mainly in the second section, "The Irreducible Effects of Deferral," proceeds *via* Freud and Derrida, with some Lacanian overtones. Both Nietzsche and Bataille, however, remain important for this discussion as well; and complementarity is implied throughout. Freud offers a more "technical" articulation than Nietzsche of the matrix of the unconscious, which is then extended and deconstructed by Derrida into the *general economy of différance* and its satellite structures, such as *trace*, *supplement*, and *writing*.

*History*, this analysis concludes, can only be *complementary*, specifically complementary to the unconscious, as both notions are deconstructed and restructured in general economic and complementary terms. We need complementarity in order to theorize history, even though we are thereby constrained to accept the limits and limitations, at times severe, of historical analysis. As a result, however, new possibilities emerge.

*In the Shadow of Hegel*

# MATRICES

... from the classical point of view an irrational element . . . inevitably requires us to forego a causal mode of description and . . . forces us to adopt a new mode of description designated as *complementary* . . .

—Niels Bohr



## CHAPTER

I shall discuss here, in introductory fashion, the major themes of the present study:

—the question of history and the transformations, in the shadow of Hegel, of our ideas about history, and the economy of theoretical transformations in general—the structure of scientific revolutions;

—the question of general economy as a matrix demanded by the unconscious, and transforming the concept of the unconscious itself;

—the framework of complementarity, developing and extending Niels Bohr's ideas.

### History

The limits of complementarity as understood by the present study appear to be very broad. It can play a role in different theoretical and historical projects, and I shall explore various possibilities offered by complementarity as an attitude and as an analytical framework throughout this study. The question of history itself—the question of the possibility or, complementarily, the impossibility of various historical projects, and of the very concept of history—will serve as the main case of this study as a

*theoretical* project. As I have stressed from the outset, however, theory and history are often complementary; and they must often be jointly, complementarily practiced with complementarity as a framework. To one degree or another, such a complementarily theoretico-historical analysis would, therefore, involve a historical analysis, in the present case the historical analysis of the question of history itself. In fact, by virtue of this complementary symmetry, the history, or theory, of the concept and project of history is related to and at times indissociable from the history and theory of the concept and project of theory. In contrast to the Hegelian economy, one can never fully integrate this historico-theoretical field or, indeed, postulate the possibility of a fully unified historico-theoretical field of any kind. One must operate and focus one's historico-theoretical optics under these anti-Hegelian conditions, at once general economic and complementary. By the same token, however, one can never control the balance of the outcome, in this case the balance of theory and history and their complementary relations in one's exploration of the idea of history.

History, according to the argument of this study, is a multiple engagement of the complementary. One of the major applications of complementarity in the field of history to be considered is its role in the structure of theoretical transformations as a multiple interaction—a complementarity—of continuities and breaks with preceding configurations of theory. This economy is historical; or, rather, it appears to have an irreducible historical component without allowing the economy to be reduced to history alone. But it also comprehends the economy of history, insofar as one is concerned with a transformation of the ideas about history, in the present study, most specifically with Hegel's vision of history and our relation to this vision. However, as Bohr discovered in the case of quantum mechanics, the process at issue here—the history of the idea of history and of our relationships with Hegel—involves a much broader spectrum of complementarities and thus demands a matrix extending beyond the interplay of continuities and breaks, and indeed beyond history. History exceeds itself. Throughout this study I shall explore various configurations involved in this (general) economy of the irreducible conjunction or complementarity of history and the excess of history. Many aspects of these configurations may, and many of them must, be seen as historical; and history itself is often at issue at such junctures.

History by itself, however, history without complementarity—for example, with theory—will not suffice, even and particularly when history is itself at issue. One always needs more, and therefore at times less, than history in order to understand and practice history.

The case of Hegel and history thus expands to engage manifold complementarities and, complementarily, historical and theoretical analyses. It demands a multiple parallel processing of complementary configurations, where we must also place our relationships with Hegel—continuities and discontinuities, proximities and distances, departures and returns, and even some arrivals. For, at least in some respects, we may not yet have arrived at places at which Hegel had arrived or from which he took his departures, even though, since its inception in Hegel, Hegelianism has developed into an immense manifold of theories, ideologies, and political practices, producing many “Hegels”—metaphysical, theological, historical, psychological and psychoanalytic, sociological, political, or even “Hegels” of natural and exact sciences, and mathematics. Hegelianism has had a long history since it announced itself in Hegel’s grand vision of History and, and *as*, Consciousness, and the mastery of History and Consciousness over everything else. It is by proclaiming this mastery that the name of Hegel made its appearance on the intellectual and political scene and has remained an extraordinarily powerful, if often unperceived, presence there ever since.

It is not, of course, that nothing has changed in this history with respect to Hegel, or in general. Along all conceivable lines—whether theoretical, ideological, political, or other—changes have been momentous; and they have transformed and multiplied “Hegel” into a manifold whose complexity and multiplicity are beyond anything that Hegel’s own ideas can master. Whether in relation to Hegel or in general, this multiplicity reflects the interaction between such lines themselves, no longer either simply separable or admitting a synthesis, Hegelian or other, but instead demanding general economic and complementary descriptions.

Our relation to Hegel cannot be seen as one relation, to begin with. It may be a relation such as in Derrida, who speaks of a relationship of “profound affinity” and proximity along with difference and distance, and of “a kind of infinitesimal and radical displacement” of Hegel (*Margins*, 14; *Marges*, 15). In Heidegger, it is also a relation of proximity and distance, but it is different from Derrida’s relation to Hegel or to Heidegger.

ger himself, in part because, as Derrida shows, Heidegger remains within the limits of or reinstates, at a new level, what Derrida defines as the metaphysics of presence, which may be seen as more or less equivalent to the restricted economy. The issue is more complex, involving many qualifications of this claim and multiple and shifting stratifications of Heidegger's and Derrida's texts, on which I shall comment throughout this study. The claim itself can, however, be maintained. Nietzsche has a still different relation of complementarity with Hegel—a relation of a considerably greater distance, but without reinstating anything, either. Marx's and Bataille's are two other contrasting relations, especially in their attitude toward dialectic: Marx retains dialectic, whereas Bataille rejects it in his anti-Hegelian "science" of general economy, and this difference correlates with their respective differences in reading Hegel himself.

A transformed Hegel, therefore, need not imply any one form of relation such as in Derrida, although in Hegel's case, Derrida and related developments and their past and present continuities have great importance, particularly in approaching the complementarity of history and the unconscious. Analysis in terms of complementarity, however, need not always be deconstructive; and one must use the very term 'deconstruction' with caution beyond Derrida, de Man, possibly Heidegger, and several other related authors and must allow for the differentiation of its functioning in all these cases as well. A given complementary analysis may be oriented toward "the new," as in Nietzsche, as opposed to the engagement by way of critique or deconstruction with "the old," such as philosophy and its closure in Derrida; and it may analytically explore an even more decisive orientation toward "the new" than in Nietzsche. Clearly, such an orientation does not in itself guarantee "the new" or "the old"; and in both Nietzsche and Derrida, new theoretical and critical results are produced. The relationships between "the new" and "the old" offer instead a complex complementarity of continuity and discontinuity, proximity and distance, joined force and confrontation, and other relations and complementarities, which may sometimes pass into each other or be seen as undecidable, but do not always do so or need be so seen. One can, however, attempt to define or at least enter this complex landscape of the question of Hegel and history by offering the following joint—complementary—claims:



a. the Hegelian paradigm of history as the history of *consciousness* still significantly governs—overshadows—our interpretive strategies and methods and our theories of interpretation: it continues to do so, often imperceptibly and in spite, or because, of all renunciations and attempts to do something opposite to it; and

b. this Hegelian paradigm of history requires a radical replacement, in Kuhnian fashion, and it has been in the process of such a replacement in the recent *history* of theory.

I shall argue that, in order to be described and analyzed, this transformation requires the joint matrix of complementarity and general economy, applied here to the economy of history; and I call the description just given complementary because it engages simultaneously but without synthesis both a continuity with—or a proximity to—and a break—or a distance—from Hegel.

In view of this claim, which implies a radical critique of Kuhn, one can speak of this transformation, or revolution, of our thinking about history as Kuhnian only to a degree, indeed, at the risk of being deceptive. Invoking Kuhn is prompted by the desire to emphasize the transformations, the radical transformations of ideas about history, even as these ideas must also maintain continuities with Hegel and with other things, some in turn remaining continuous with Hegel and others breaking away from him. The structure of scientific revolutions becomes a double or indeed complementary economy of, *at each point*, continuities and breaks. I shall consider this economy in more detail in the next chapter. A different theory and a different practice of history emerging in these transformations inevitably have led to a critical analysis of the Kuhnian theory itself. Kuhn's theory was an important contribution, particularly as opposed to the theories of Karl Popper, who may be seen as the "Hegel" of the history of science. Nevertheless, it was not a radical enough transformation of classical theories. A critical analysis of Kuhn, along with related and preceding developments, has been massively undertaken in the field of history and sociology of science in recent decades, most prominently in Paul Feyerabend's works;<sup>1</sup> and as Kuhn before him, Feyerabend, one can argue, was greatly influenced by Bohr's ideas.

The developments at issue in the present study and those defining the

postmodernist or poststructuralist—or let us simply say, the contemporary intellectual landscape—require an even more radical questioning of that type. The landscape itself is hardly simple. Nor, anymore than in any other inquiry, can one avoid losses in tracing new “attitudes towards history,” to borrow a phrase from Kenneth Burke, who contributed much to this change, often from behind the scenes, from the margins and the unconscious, at times lost and forgotten, of theory.<sup>2</sup> These margins, however, no longer seem marginal at all. The postquantum interplay of the lines and forces of this landscape requires models and metaphors as complex as we can summon and develop from any available source—literature or art, modern science, history, or elsewhere. The interplay of lines of demarcation and the complexity of the play of continuities and breaks and boundaries within and without different fields—philosophy, literature, or art, criticism, theory, history, or politics—are a part of this landscape, against which the economy of transformations just suggested would be played out in any given case of revolution or paradigm shift.

The case of Hegel and history is unique by virtue of the self-referential economy it produces in this context. For in addressing the transformations of the idea of history, one is dealing with transformations—evolutions, revolutions, or complementarily both—of our understanding of transformations themselves—evolutionary, revolutionary, or complementarily both. Hegel may well have been the first to engage this doubly Heraclitean economy—the Heraclitean becoming reflecting upon itself. Hegel’s revolution *transforms* this economy into the economy of *history*, the history of, and as, self-consciousness, finally absolute self-consciousness and absolute self-reflection—Absolute Knowledge.

One can also speak of this reflection of the Heraclitean upon itself in describing the history, in the shadow of Hegel, of our ideas about history and of the transformation of the concept itself. The understanding, necessarily joint, of this history and of the results of this transformation would in turn transform both or all three economies—history, the Heraclitean, and reflection. The emerging matrix, the matrix that defines the paradigm shift, offers jointly a general, rather than restricted, economy and complementarity of continuities and discontinuities, determinacies and indeterminacies, unities and multiplicities. These and related terms and clusters

are often engaged by historical descriptions and analyses, and by classical theories—restricted economies—of history. But the interactions among the terms, within and among such oppositions and clusters, and among the oppositions and clusters themselves are radically transformed by making them complementary. This transformation takes us to the point of the impossibility of containing the fields involved by any of these names, or their interaction—indeed, as Derrida argues, by any given name or conglomerate of names. By the same token, it also takes us to the point of the impossibility of a full, and particularly fully conscious, reflection, a question that I shall address throughout the present study in a variety of contexts, specifically of the transformations of science and theory. The transformation at issue entails, therefore, a radical problematization and deconstruction of all self-referentiality and other economies of reflexivity and self-consciousness defining Hegel's vision of interpretation, theory, and history.

This deconstruction enacts a rigorous suspension, not an uncritical dismissal, of the Hegelian and other classical or restricted economies, including reflexivity; that is, it recomprehends restricted economies and utilizes them complementarily within general economies. As Bohr intimated at several crucial junctures of his work on complementarity, it may very well be that it is above all reflexivity that demands complementarity as a very broad theoretical matrix or a paradigm applicable well beyond physics. While transformed by this general economic and complementary understanding, the conceptual and metaphorical conglomerate at issue in the question of history does not, therefore, lose its self-referential economy. The paradigm shift in our understanding of history does take place through the refiguration of the nature of *transformation* and the character of change, in relation to which one must position the concepts and economy of history. The self-referential economy in fact extends to general economy and complementarity: the "histories" of general economy and complementarity are themselves general economic and complementary, as both conceptions and modes of practice, and their histories interpenetrate each other. This interconnectivity itself suggests a model of history—that is, the general economic complementarity of history and the excess of history that makes history possible.

## General Economy

*General economy*, as Georges Bataille defines it, is a mode of theory that deals with the production, material or intellectual, of excesses that cannot be utilized:

The science of relating the object of thought to sovereign moments, in fact is only a *general economy* which envisages the meaning of these objects in relation to each other and finally in relation to the loss of meaning. The question of this *general economy* is situated on the level of *political economy*, but the science designated by this name is only a restricted economy (restricted to commercial values). In question is the essential problem for the science dealing with the use of wealth. The *general economy*, in the first place, makes apparent that *excesses of energy are produced, which, by definition, cannot be utilized. The excessive energy can only be lost without the slightest aim, consequently without any meaning [sans aucun sens]*. It is this useless, senseless loss that is sovereignty. (*L'Expérience intérieure*, 282–83 n.; emphasis added)<sup>3</sup>

At issue or, as Bataille would have it, at stake [en jeu] in the question of general economy is the possibility of theory—*general economy*—that relates to the irreducible, unaccountable loss in representation and meaning in any interpretive or theoretical process. At issue, thus, is a general economy of all meaning, including the interpretive or theoretical, rather than only politico-economic considerations. In the latter case, a general economy of unreserved expenditures and incalculable or unprofitable losses is related to a restricted political economy, such as in Adam Smith, Hegel, or Marx. Such restricted economies, however, are still predicated on the configuration of meaning, indeed conscious meaning—meaningful investment, meaningful expenditure of labor and capital, and so forth. The relationships between different levels of economic interplay thus are not only metaphorically parallel but also metonymically connected or mediated. But, against Hegel, they cannot be fully unified within one system, since such a system would control—fully, without unaccountable loss—its own development, its own meaning, its “its-own-ness,” which is impossible under the conditions of general economy.

The genealogy of general economy is complex and multilinear, and is itself general economic, beginning in fact with Hegel and Marx. Bataille’s general economy as the “science” of sovereignty, as based on the economy

of loss or unreserved expenditure, is equally opposed to, or rather is an ambivalent displacement of, both Marx's political economy and Hegelian dialectic, specifically, although not exclusively, the dialectic of master and slave in the *Phenomenology*. Sovereignty is juxtaposed to Hegel's economy of mastery [Herrschaft], that claims, finally untenably, to avoid the unproductive expenditure of intellectual, psychological, or political energy. The role of Nietzsche's ideas may well be the most decisive, however. Nietzsche was a figure of paramount significance for Bataille, who often claims for himself a unique proximity to Nietzsche. More importantly in the present context, Nietzsche may be seen as the first practitioner of the general economic mode of theorizing. Niels Bohr may well have been the second one; or rather Bohr understood that the practice of quantum theory must be, in present terms, a kind of general economy.

After Bataille, the general economic thematics was variously developed by a number of major figures on the French scene, most especially by Derrida, whose works offer new theoretical possibilities. Derrida's essay on Bataille, "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve," in *Writing and Difference*, is most relevant in this context, but the idea and practice are themselves crucial, even defining, throughout Derrida's works. According to Derrida, the textual practice, the practice of *writing* in his extended sense of the term, must form or conform to a general economy.<sup>4</sup> I speak here of Derrida's theoretical or, in his earlier terms, grammatological writing. 'Grammatology' is defined by Derrida as the "science," in fact a general economy, of *writing* in his sense, which he juxtaposes to a narrow or traditional concept of writing. The latter is conceived metaphysically as a representation of speech and as hierarchically subordinated to speech within the metaphysical opposition of speech and writing. *Writing* in Derrida's sense may be seen as a transformation of language—or what the classical theory, from Plato to Saussure and beyond, defines as language—and interpretation, including theoretical discourse, under the general economy of *différance*, Derrida's arguably most famous "name," and related structures—*trace*, *supplement*, *dissemination*, *writing*, and so forth.

Their list, or rather network, cannot, by definition, be closed. This structural—irreducible—proliferation, or in Derrida's terms *dissemination*, of theoretical terms and functions is one of the fundamental consequences of general economic understanding, applied by Derrida within

the general economy generated by the network of his “neither word[s] nor concept[s]” (*Margins*, 7; *Marges*, 7). This *dissemination* cannot be controlled by the traditional, restricted economic, means. In fact, the general economy would tell us that this *dissemination* cannot be controlled by any means; or more precisely it cannot be *fully* controlled. For in any given situation or at any given textual juncture, such a proliferation will be terminated in one way or another. Under different conditions, however, one may need a very different array of terms, concepts, demarcations, and so forth; and there is no taxonomical or other closure that would exhaust, saturate, or contain all such extensions once and for all. In short, there can be no more absolute proliferation or multiplicity than absolute unity or any other form of absolute control of the multiple. *Dissemination* may in fact be defined by the suspension of a full control of the multiple, whether by classically philosophical—in particular, Hegelian or Heideggerian—psychoanalytical—in particular, Lacanian—linguistic—in particular, Saussurian—or other restricted economies. This general economic *dissemination* is thus juxtaposed to the controlled—restricted economic—plurality and determination of classical philosophy, psychoanalysis, linguistics, anthropology, and other human and social sciences.

It follows that, while it may have a certain strategic priority in Derrida or a certain historical preeminence after Derrida, *différance*, by definition, cannot be seen as primary in relation to other Derridean structures. Thus, in particular *différance* and *dissemination* necessitate and define each other;<sup>5</sup> but in truth the same may be said about *trace*, *supplement*, *writing*, and other “neither words nor concepts” employed by Derrida. They all interact and necessitate but are not identical to each other; indeed they are not identical to themselves. In fact, again by definition, *différance* cannot be primary or, more precisely, absolutely primary to anything, whether such potential counterparts of it are conceived by means of a general, as in Derrida, or a restricted economy. This active usage of his general deconstruction of the primary in the general economy of *différance* and elsewhere in Derrida, including in relation to the term ‘deconstruction,’ is often stressed by Derrida himself and is crucial to all his strategies and frameworks.

Derrida’s introduction of *différance* in 1967 may be seen as a major new step in the history of the—general—economy of radical difference,

deferral, exteriority, and dissemination, although many of its features are found in Derrida's earlier works. As a modification or refiguration of the French word "*différence*," *différance* connotes an economy of, jointly, difference and deferral or difference and repetition. Derrida, however, conceives of the economy of *différance* much more broadly, although he is able to do so, in part, by utilizing and deriving the necessary consequences of the joint economy of difference-deferral connoted by its name. According to Derrida:

The same, precisely, is *différance* (with an *a*) as the displaced and equivocal passage of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other. Thus one could reconsider all the pairs of opposites on which philosophy is constructed and on which our discourse lives, not in order to see opposition erase itself but to see what indicates that each of the terms must appear as the *différance* of the other, as the other different and deferred in the economy of the same (the intelligible as differing-deferring the sensible, as the sensible different and deferred; the concept as different and deferred, differing-deferring intuition; culture as nature different and deferred, differing-deferring; all the others of *physis*—*tekhnē*, *nomos*, *thesis*, society, freedom, history, mind, etc.—as *physis* different and deferred, or as *physis* differing and deferring. *Physis* in *différance*. And in this we may see the site of a reinterpretation of *mimēsis* in its alleged opposition to *physis*). (*Margins*, 17; *Marges*, 18)

A very broad and very radical reinterpretation of all classical concepts is thus at stake in the functioning of *différance*. This broader functioning in fact forces Derrida to expand the resulting conceptual network and introduce—"irreducibly proliferate"—new names and structures as just indicated. As shall be seen in detail throughout this study, extending and radicalizing the Freudian and Lacanian economy of the unconscious, *différance* affects, or infects, all interpretive and theoretical processes, including its own inscription or textualization, so as to make them general economic.

*Différance* can actually be defined through this general economic insertion of its functioning in any given field, to the extent that it can be defined at all, since this functioning also affects and disrupts all classical economies of definition. In this sense, *différance* replaces or translates Bataille's 'sovereignty.' Thus understood, *différance* enacts an irreducible,

general economic loss in all representation by ineluctably—or as Derrida himself would have it, always already—subtracting from the fullness of any presence, original unity, centrality, or plenitude, whether they are conceived in terms of form, content, structure, history, logos or telos, or other concepts defining Western philosophy and intellectual history. Derrida customarily assembles these various classical or metaphysical forms of governing interpretive, theoretical, or historical processes under the general rubric of ‘presence,’ and the corresponding theories under the rubrics of ‘metaphysics of presence,’ ‘logocentrism,’ or, following Heidegger, ‘ontotheology.’ At the same time, however, *différance*, along with the accompanying structures and operators, must be conceived as *producing* the effects just listed—presence, plenitude, unity, form, content, structure, history, and so forth. *Différance*, thus, connotes the joint and often simultaneous dynamics of production-dislocation, jointly an energy-like and an entropy-like Heraclitean process, while the general economy of *différance* and accompanying structures can be seen as recomprehending and precomprehending classical theories: it accounts for the conditions of their possibility and the production of their concepts and must be configured in order for classical theories to be reconfigured.

The same transformational dynamics and general economic re-comprehending must, therefore, also be applied whenever one engages the economy of consciousness and self-consciousness, and Derrida has so used and even “defined” *différance* on many occasions, including specifically against—but also in the shadow of—Hegel. Even as and because it produces the effects of consciousness and self-consciousness, *différance* irreducibly subtracts from the fullness of any consciousness and self-consciousness, individual or collective; or, importantly, from the metaphysically conceived fullness—plenitude—or presence of the unconscious. In order to avoid a metaphysical, restricted economy of the unconscious, the latter cannot, therefore, be thought of or metaphorized as existing somewhere by itself, in the fullness of its presence, absolutely outside consciousness and in metaphysical opposition to it. In short, the unconscious must be figured general economically; and in this sense both Derrida’s and Bataille’s, or earlier Nietzsche’s, conceptions, such as *différance* or sovereignty, extend and refigure the unconscious.

If one keeps this latter qualification in mind, however, proceeding via



Nietzsche and Freud, and in Derrida's case via Lacan, in both Bataille and Derrida the movement from a restricted to a general economy is always a movement from consciousness, and in particular self-consciousness, to the unconscious. *Différance* is indissociable from this joint movement, and it must, once again, itself be written general economically. Which is perhaps to say that it must be *written* in Derrida's sense of *writing*. As Derrida writes in "Différance":

Elsewhere, in a reading of Bataille, I have attempted to indicate what might come of a rigorous and, in a new sense, "scientific" *relating* of the "restricted economy" that takes no part in expenditure without reserve, death, opening itself to nonmeaning, etc., to a general economy that *takes into account* the nonreserve, that keeps in reserve the nonreserve, if it can be put thus. I am speaking of a relationship between a *différance* that can make a profit on its investment and a *différance* that misses its profit, the *investiture* of a presence that is pure and without loss here being confused with absolute loss, with death. Through such a relating of a restricted and a general economy the very project of philosophy, under the privileged heading of Hegelianism, is displaced and reinscribed. The *Aufhebung*—*la relève*—is constrained into writing itself otherwise. Or perhaps simply into writing itself. Or, better, into taking account of its consumption of writing. (*Margins*, 19; *Marges*, 20–21)

*Aufhebung* is the central Hegelian concept, based on the double or triple meaning of the German word—negation, preservation or conservation, and supersession.<sup>6</sup> Heidegger offers the following excellent rendition: "[The] sublating or *Aufhebung* must . . . be conceived . . . in terms of the resonance of its threefold meaning: *tollere*, removing and eliminating the mere, initial illusion; *conservare*, preserving and including in the experience; but as an *elevare*, a lifting up to a higher level of knowing itself and its known" (*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 28). As Alan Bass comments in his translator's note on the passage from "*Différance*" under consideration: "For Derrida the deconstruction of metaphysics implies an endless confrontation with Hegelian concepts, and the move from a restricted, 'speculative' philosophical economy—in which there is nothing that cannot be made to make sense, in which there is nothing *other* than meaning—to a 'general' economy—which affirms that which

exceeds meaning, the excess of meaning from which there can be no speculative profit—involves a reinterpretation of the central Hegelian concept: the *Aufhebung*” (*Margins*, 19–20 n. 23).

One can, thus, as both Bataille and Derrida do, approach general economy by way of a certain reading of Hegel and a displacement of Hegel’s dialectic and the *Aufhebung*. This displacement, according to Derrida, is infinitesimal and radical at once. Analogously, although not identically, to the general economy of sovereignty in Bataille, *différance* and its general economy are, in part, defined by this ambivalent displacement. By the same token, however, the general economy, as Derrida explicitly argues, cannot be rigorously compatible with the *Aufhebung* (*Writing and Difference*, 274–76), even though Bataille himself, to a degree and at certain moments, claims otherwise: “It is useless to insist upon the Hegelian character of this operation [the contradictory experience of prohibition and transgression], which corresponds to the moment of dialectic expressed by the untranslatable German word *Aufheben* (to surpass in maintaining)” (*Erotism*, 36 n. 1; *L’Erotisme*, 42 n.; translation modified).<sup>7</sup> On that occasion, as Derrida indicates, Bataille speaks of a transgression without “return to nature,” which may explain Bataille’s otherwise problematic appeal to the *Aufhebung* at that juncture. The movement “from restricted to general economy” is, however, in no sense a return to a pre-Hegelian, and particularly a-historical or a-scientific—a-theoretical—economy. For if Bataille does claim, problematically, in “*Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice*,” that Hegel sacrifices the scientific—which is to say, philosophical—consciousness to the—non-scientific—naivete of sacrifice, he nowhere speaks of sacrificing the theoretical rigor of general economy.

While it is rigorously theoretical, even, according to Bataille, scientific, however, and while it must utilize and is productive of restricted economies, general economy demands strategies and textual practices very different from those of classical—restricted economic—philosophical or theoretical discourse. This difference has been demonstrated by Nietzsche’s, Bataille’s, and Derrida’s practice, and by several other figures that can be invoked here, perhaps particularly Lacan and Luce Irigaray.

As the preceding discussion suggests, and as will become apparent in the course of the analysis to follow, general economy also entails a much richer relationship between theory and politics than restricted economy

does. Of course, Hegelian economy, although restricted, is always historical and therefore always a political economy. This economy is then refigured by Marx as a materialist political economy, and both Hegel and Marx have a common source in Adam Smith's political economy. In Bataille, too, as we just saw, "the *question* of this *general economy* is situated on the level of *political economy*" (emphasis added). In a general economy, however, one must engage much richer and more complex interactions between various economies—theoretical, historical, political, or still others. These different economies, furthermore, cannot be unequivocally separated or their interaction controlled as in the case, or rather according to the claims, of restricted economies.

In a prelogical or pretheoretical sense, as distinguished from a preontological sense, a general economy precedes any restricted economy; but it does not simply suspend restricted economies. Instead, general economy precomprehends restricted economies; it redefines their functioning and utilizes them in its own functioning. This precomprehending character of general economy is a crucial point for Derrida, who translates Bataille's matrix into the general economy of *différance*, *trace*, *supplement*, *dissemination*, *writing*, and so forth. While *productive* of such new structures, Derrida's general economy is perhaps designed even more in order to deconstruct and precomprehend various restricted economies, in particular the restricted economy of Hegelian *Aufhebung*. At the same time, however, Derrida's general economy continues to depend on restricted economies in its functioning, including the textual production of Derrida's neither words nor concepts, such as *différance*, or to be more precise, the textual production by way of which one can relate, obliquely, to such neither words nor concepts. Derrida sees this dependence on restricted economies as the closure of metaphysics.

General economies are "exempt" from the penalty that, according to the regime of philosophy as a restricted economy, one must always pay as a philosopher or a theorist for losses one encounters. A general economy institutes a kind of theoretical legal reform. To the extent that one can still speak in these terms, the theoretical profit must now be achieved otherwise—to a degree, through a certain loss. It is not that one can thus simply or easily, as it were, *write off* the losses from one's theoretical taxes. Although, to use a politico-economic metaphor, the preceding regime of profit is no longer deemed necessary or even always

*useful*, and loss in general may be affirmed and even celebrated under the new regime, losses—whether they are restricted economic or general economic—still hurt and make theoretical life difficult. Nevertheless, the *price* of classical knowledge and of the classical claim of knowledge is heavy, as Hegel's case would show, though not only Hegel's. The loss of philosophical meaning may thus be compensated for and may even be beneficial, to the degree one can evaluate the situation in classical terms.

General economies, in fact, exceed restricted economies as economies of consumption by enriching the latter, both by introducing more loss and more gain into the preceding regime of interpretation, history, and theory. As opposed to restricted economies, general economies must relate to losses, unreserved expenditures. But no general economy can be seen as the economy of losses or expenditures alone, whether calculable or incalculable, reserved or unreserved. By the same token, the interplay of conservation, accumulation, and expenditure in a general economy is not simply, or only, conflictual and oppositional, but is again multiply interactive or, in present terms, complementary. A general economy *relates* consumption and loss or expenditure. It makes them complementary by both differentiating and intermixing them, and doing so differently under different conditions. In part for this reason, there can never be only one general economy even in a given theoretical and textual practice. A general economy must continuously transform itself even within a given text or style. The effects of textual and strategic repetition must be played out as well. Many things have to be done more than once. The latter phrase itself has a double meaning that is useful here, implying, as Derrida's *différance* does, both always already difference and plurality or *dissemination*, and a possibility of repetition.

Bataille's formulations do not imply, at least they should not, an idealization of loss, although they do assign a certain strategic priority to expenditure. Certainly, many of Bataille's examples of loss and unproductive expenditure may be refigured as productive investments along different lines, as Bataille knew. Can all such examples and cases be so refigured? Possibly, but the relative value, strength, effectiveness, or necessity of such re-figuration would have to be considered, since more generally neither consumption nor loss can by themselves master all cases. There will always be an excess of any given description and a corresponding loss in representation. Against Hegel, *structural* loss—

entropy as against energy—is obviously crucial to the present analysis as well. The goal, however, is not to discount consumption, conservation, consciousness, or knowledge, but to have a comprehensive matrix reconfiguring them.

“The *general economy*, in the first place, makes apparent that *excesses of energy are produced, which, by definition, cannot be utilized. The excessive energy can only be lost without the slightest aim, consequently without any meaning.*” That the *excessive energy* is lost does not mean, however, that some energies *cannot be* utilized, via the production of meaning or value—conceptual, politico-economic, aesthetic, or other. One can even *utilize* losses, write them off, as it were, including in Derrida’s sense of *writing* and within its general economy. Bataille is careful to maintain that there is no more absolutely productive expenditure than absolutely unproductive expenditure, no more absolute losses than absolute gains. In this sense, connoting that something is always—always already—lost and thus that we can never fully utilize the available resources of energy, the irreducible loss of general economy can be juxtaposed to absolute loss or waste, implying that all available energy is wasted. Whatever forms or metaphors of energy are at issue, we can no more fully waste than we can fully conserve. The radical loss of general economy signals, above all, loss of the *absolute*.

Insofar as one can, as one must within certain limits, relate consumption and pleasure, general economy enacts a kind of “beyond the pleasure principle” of irreducible inhibition. But it also inhibits, at times through consumption and pleasure, that which exceeds consumption and pleasure themselves, just as much as it inhibits them. This necessity finds its manifestation in Freud’s complex and mutually inhibiting stratifications of conscious and unconscious processes. These stratifications and inhibitions are finally irreducible and interminable, and so, as a result, is *analysis* itself. Neither pleasure nor consumption can be always or unconditionally related, although in practice they often do become related. The very structure of consumption and pleasure must be seen as both enriched and inhibited as a result—and not just by loss and pain, which are their most commonly invoked direct opposites. A general economy, therefore, cannot address the configurations it considers only in terms of loss, and it must continually engage various forms of conservation or consumption, including those that are sometimes seen as absolute from a classical per-

spective. The force of Bataille's idea comes from the exposure of the impossibility of mapping the economy of interpretation, theory, and history in terms of consumption, whether as dialectic and *Aufhebung*, or other, for example, Kant's economy of "taste."<sup>8</sup>

The unequivocal suspension of either form of expenditure, productive or unproductive, is problematic. For example, it may lead to the metaphysics or to the politico-economic utopias of expenditure, difference, plurality, otherness, and so forth. Such suspensions remain persistent even in very recent discussions both critical of and sympathetic to the problematics at issue here.

A suspension of that type may function as what Derrida generally terms the unproblematized reversal—a reversal that is unaccompanied by a reinscription of the members of a given metaphysically established opposition or hierarchy and as a result leaves the metaphysical base supporting the initial configuration untouched. Thus, in order to deconstruct rigorously and effectively the classical opposition of speech and writing—or the signified and the signifier, form and content, mind and matter, and so forth—it would not be enough simply to reverse the opposition and the hierarchy privileging speech over writing by virtue of its closer proximity to thought, logos, or truth. Instead, possibly using such a reversal strategically as a phase and, again strategically, borrowing a name, such as writing, from a subordinate member of a hierarchy, such as writing over speech, one must produce a new concept. By means of such a new concept, or a network of concepts produced in the process, the whole preceding configuration—the members of the opposition; the relationships between the concepts involved; and finally, the whole system that produces a given opposition or hierarchy—is recomprehended or pre-comprehended in the sense delineated earlier. The old configuration is deconstructed and refigured within a new one, rather than uncritically abandoned in the process. In this sense, one can speak of a rigorous or critical suspension of the preceding configuration or system in juxtaposition to an uncritical negation or unproblematized reversal.

Derrida pursues precisely this type of project and this set of strategies, strategically "conser[ving] the *old name*," the subordinate name, "writing" for his new concept (*Margins*, 329; *Marges*, 392). The resulting concept, or, again, neither a word, nor a concept, of *writing* is, however, no longer a conventional or narrow sense of writing understood as a

representation of speech, the latter concept and all other classical concepts involved being in turn transformed and reinscribed. As Derrida writes: "Of course it is not a question of resorting to the same concept of writing and of simply inverting the dissymmetry that now has become problematical. It is a question, rather, of producing a new concept of writing" (*Positions*, 26; *Positions*, 37). In addition, the whole economy—a general economy—of structures is produced, whose network, as we have seen, by definition cannot be exhausted.

In short, the reinscription and recomprehension at issue amounts to a production of a general as against a restricted economy of writing. This production, however, radically transforms and recomprehends a much broader restricted economy, including specifically the Hegelian dialectic, from which the operation just described differs radically, even though both may at certain points look alike and indeed, within deconstructed and refigured limits, coincide. For one thing, the Hegelian economy always conserves its stakes, calculates its expenditures, and does not waste its resources, or rather it claims the possibility of such a system. Hence it is a restricted economy, which, however, cannot be simply abandoned or reversed, but must, again, be recomprehended by means of a general economy that would also relate to unreserved expenditure, unproductive loss of meaning, and waste of resources.

This lack of a recomprehending economy is one of the reasons why Marx's reversal of the Hegelian dialectic remains within the limits of restricted economy, where Bataille correctly positions Marx's political economy. Marx's reversal of Hegel's dialectic gives the latter a material or, rather, materialist instead of idealist base, but at the same time by bypassing, just as Hegel does, the economy of loss, this reversal produces or, indeed, reproduces metaphysics and Hegelianism as the metaphysical materialism or, one could say, the "idealism" of matter and of materialist history.

Restricted economies can, of course, be produced by means and strategies other than unproblematized reversal as just described, including, as recent history would demonstrate, within the attempts to avoid unproblematized reversal. One would not, however, be able to open the space of general economy by either suspending conservation, gains, or productive expenditure altogether or by unconditionally privileging loss, waste, or unreserved expenditure. One must, then, understand general economy

as the economy of interaction of losses and gains, productive and unproductive expenditures, meaningful and meaningless configurations, and as figuring the diversity of their interplay.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the inscription of loss, waste, unreserved expenditure, and meaning-less-ness where classical theories—restricted economies—“see” gain, conservation, investment, and meaning-full-ness remains Bataille’s great contribution. It radically transforms and expands the theoretical and metaphorical horizons of modern theory.

Derrida’s general economy is equally characterized by the features just described, as are Nietzsche’s and Bohr’s theories, both of which, this study contends, can be seen as general economic. Moving from Nietzsche and Freud, the inscription of *différance* in Derrida proceeds, as we have seen, via Bataille, who enters, next to Hegel and *Aufhebung*, at a crucial moment in the inscription of *différance*—at “the point of greatest obscurity, . . . the very enigma of *différance*” (*Margins*, 19; *Marges*, 20). There is much mediation, *différance*, in this double—complementary—immediacy and proximity, indissociable but different, to Hegel and Bataille in “Différance.” In commenting on Bataille’s definition with which I began here, Derrida writes:

The writing of sovereignty places discourse *in relation* [*en rapport*] to absolute non-discourse. Like general economy, it is not the loss of meaning, but, as we have just read, the “relation to this loss of meaning.” It opens the question of meaning. It does not describe unknowledge, for this is impossible, but only the effects of unknowledge. “In sum, it would be impossible to speak of unknowledge itself, while we can speak of its effects” [“Du non-savoir lui-même, il y aurait en somme impossibilité de parler, tandis que nous pouvons parler de ses effets”]. (*Writing and Difference*, 270; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 397; translation modified)

As just considered, the “production” aspect of Bataille’s conception is equally decisive, however, leading to the interaction and, in my terms here, complementarity between the *historical* and *unconscious* dimensions of the general economy. Bataille’s conception depends on a cluster of entropy and energy metaphors, in which Bataille follows Nietzsche and the developments of contemporary science. “Excesses of energy” and therefore *energy* itself, to begin with, “are produced.” This “energy,” however, is also something that cannot exist in an ontological sense,



whether pre-Heideggerian or Heideggerian. This dynamics makes a certain entropic production into an efficacy of energy. At issue is not what “is,” for by this stage, all ontology is suspended, but what we can and cannot say about this “efficacy.” I shall use this term throughout the present study in order to connote such efficacious but never classically causal dynamics—the dynamics equally crucial for both general economy and Bohr’s complementarity. Such ‘efficacies’ produce complementarily both causal and a-causal effects. So understood, ‘efficacy’ can be juxtaposed to the more customarily used ‘efficacy,’ which term seems to imply a more classically conceived causal dynamics. Alan Bass correctly uses ‘efficacy’ as a translation of French *l’efficace* in the context of Derida’s *différance*, as in “the efficacy [l’efficace] of the thematics of *différance*” (*Margins*, 7; *Marges*, 7).<sup>10</sup>

The general economic efficacy producing such effects as “matter,” “history,” or “the unconscious” is an—entropic—dynamism of loss. But it is also, in the same *movement*, an energy, a dynamism of production, even of excessive production, including the production of excess, which, however, can never be fully utilized. If we could still speak of temporality here, time would be defined as the “source”—that is, a mutually inhibiting efficacy as defined earlier—of both energy and entropy, of both productive forces and dissipating forces, at times destructive, even violently destructive forces.

In both of its aspects, productive and disruptive, this efficacy has enormous anti-Hegelian potential.

*First*, in relation to conceptual production, it follows that intellectual energy cannot be fully utilized in conceptual production; only a portion, perhaps a very small one, is available to our functioning by way of concepts and to our production of concepts. Nor, of course, can the production of concepts be fully figured in terms of conceptual and conscious economy, as Bataille shows in many great passages in *Inner Experience*, in *Hegel, la mort, et le sacrifice*, and in related texts.

*Second*, Bataille engages further dislocation of the concept of “knowledge” as conscious and conceptual or whatever other “knowledge” is involved in Hegel—up to Absolute Knowledge—and elsewhere in philosophy, even though, to the extent that any such forms are possible, the degree of “knowledge” may be even greater in a general economy. All conscious and conceptual knowledge, and all (re)presentation in general,

are the effects of that which enacts an irreducible loss in presentation, although it cannot be reduced to this loss either, and to which Nietzsche, Bohr, Bataille, and Derrida relate by means of general economy.

A *general* economy and complementarity of history and the unconscious is always an economy of possible textual strategies—that is, of how one can work with the unconscious, of what is possible and what is impossible to claim about it—rather than a metaphysical interpolation of Freudian or other models at work there. Thus, it is never a question of simply, or only, destroying Hegel or even Hegelianism. One must destroy a great deal, too—with the Nietzschean hammer. But one also needs a productive juxtaposition of theoretical ideologies and the texts and histories that produce them.

In particular, while rigorously suspending classical, and specifically Hegelian, forms of historicity, and thus all absolute historicity, general economy can be seen and is best seen as radically historical in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida alike. As Derrida writes:

Now, if one muses upon the fact that Hegel is doubtless the first to have demonstrated the ontological unity of method and historicity, it must indeed be concluded that what is *exceeded* by sovereignty is not only the “subject” (*Méthode [de méditation]*, p. 75), but history itself. Not that one returns, in classical and pre-Hegelian fashion, to an ahistorical sense which would constitute a figure of the *Phenomenology of the Mind*. Sovereignty transgresses the entirety of the history of meaning and the entirety of the meaning of history, and the project of knowledge which has always obscurely welded these two together. Unknowledge is, then, superhistorical, but only because it takes its responsibilities from the completion of history and from the closure of absolute knowledge, having first taken them seriously and having then betrayed them by exceeding them or by simulating them in play. (*Writing and Difference*, 269; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 395)

In short Bataille's—or Nietzsche's or Derrida's—general economy pre-comprehends the Hegelian project of history and, and as, knowledge by means of inscribing a play which is in effect more radically historical than the Hegelian historicity could possibly allow for; and it is such in part by virtue of prohibiting any absolute of unconditional historicity.<sup>11</sup>

By the same token, a general economy offers a theoretical juxtaposition

to the *metaphysical* concepts of the unconscious, of which perhaps the earliest example is Schopenhauer's reversal of Hegel, which replaces Hegel's *historical* consciousness with an ahistorical economy of the unconscious. It was an important, even a crucial move; and one would need a meticulous analysis in order to make a rigorous textual claim against Schopenhauer in this respect. This analysis cannot be pursued here. It should be pointed out, however, that, as a "reversal" *within* idealism, it is crucially different from the reversal in Marx's nearly contemporary materialist and historical political economy as just discussed. This reversal *is* similar to Marx's move, however, in its strategy of reading and theory in relation to Hegel as the main precursor.

The whole historico-theoretical configuration surrounding Hegel—between Marx and Schopenhauer and other figures such as Feuerbach—could yield a rich harvest, specifically in relation to Nietzsche's theories, strategies and styles. Nietzsche's and perhaps Freud's precarious positions between Schopenhauer and Hegel are most interesting in this respect. It is possible that the early Nietzsche's critical attitude toward history and toward Hegel was influenced by Schopenhauer, although it would again be misleading to characterize this early stage of Nietzsche's thinking as ahistorical. As will be seen in Chapter 7, Nietzsche's positions become more and more historical—and more and more unconscious, and more and more *as* the unconscious—in his later writing, in which the inscription of the historical itself becomes more complex as well. So does his attitude toward Hegel, which had never been simple in the first place.

At the same time, however, conjoining matter and the unconscious within the economy of radical, but never absolute, alterity, Nietzsche's economy, like Derrida's or Bataille's, is a materialist economy of interpretation and history. As a general and thus un-dialectical and anti-dialectical economy, Nietzsche's economy must be juxtaposed to the Hegelian idealist dialectical economy and the Marxist materialist dialectical economy, which, we recall, serves for Bataille as the defining case of a restricted economy. All dialectic—materialist and idealist alike—can be only a restricted economy, and always manifests all aspects of the latter—the metaphysics of presence, ontotheology, logocentrism, even idealism—the idealism of matter.

The general economy and its ramifications in Bataille are extraordinary conceptions, both in what they absorb from preceding intellectual history

and what they announce for what has followed, and perhaps for things yet to come; and I shall explore many of these ramifications in the course of this study. For the moment, I want, by way of example, to apply Bataille's conception of loss to the "energies," "energies-entropies," of textual production, where its force is readily apparent.

This question must have been on Bataille's mind, whether in relation to his own writing or his life, or in general, whether one speaks of literary, theoretical, or political writing (*The Accursed Share*, 10–12). Bataille practiced, jointly and interactively—complementarily—both modes of textual production. In Bataille, the literary may at any point become theoretical or political; or conversely the theoretical or the political literary; all three can be variously intermingled or separated in a given text, and their interplay becomes intricately distributed and balanced, or imbalanced, between different texts. Nor, of course, can such plural or, in my terms here, complementary modes be contained by these—literary, theoretical, and political—or indeed any given set of denominations.

It is also worth noting that the problem of textual production is in effect the Hegelian problem; and finally is or relates to the problem of history. For the (restricted) economy of the Hegelian spirit—*Geist*—is an attempt to conceive or to derive the implications of a system of conceptual production without unaccountable losses—without waste—and without uncontrolled indeterminacy and multiplicity of meaning, style and genre; in short, a system without the unconscious. Such a system cannot, of course, be human. For, as Hegel knew, losses are irreducible in any human theoretical project, individual or collective, no matter how one tries to minimize them.

Such losses appear at every level, from ideas that never found their articulation or could not be included, given one's limits and constraints, to passages and at times whole essays left behind on trains, misplaced, or still otherwise lost. In fact, one of the key aspects of general economic, irreducible loss is that the manifold of different possibilities and configurations of loss cannot be closed or fully accounted for, whether by means of taxonomical classification or otherwise. New technologies modify, often radically, this process of textual production or textual loss, but thus far, these technologies have not affected the persistence of losses themselves. Some losses, it is true, may be gains, or may in the end become gains, just as some perceived gains may prove to be losses. Ideas and

formulations may find their places elsewhere—in other projects, essays, or teaching—and thus no longer simply be losses. Nevertheless, some losses will be irreducible, like dreams that escape recall—*perhaps*, one must add, for who knows whether those losses, too, may not somehow be utilized. Then, too, all theories and interpretations partake in their way of the nature of dreams, to which Nietzsche liked to compare them, even though they are in other ways distinct from what we call, or recall as, dreams.

Such losses are always incurred and are incurable by any “therapy”; and defining the general economic field, they constitute a powerful conceptual force against Hegel and the Hegelian *Geist* and against the Hegelian economy of human thinking and action grounded in the economy of *Geist*. For, while Hegel is fully aware of the irreducibility of loss and waste in any human economy, individual or collective, he never theorizes this loss other than by means of a restricted economy. In order to do so he would have to abandon *Geist*, to begin with, and many other things in addition; or to put it differently, he would have to derive, as Nietzsche did, the radical consequences of the death of *Geist*—of abandoning *Geist*, or equivalent or analogous (restricted) economies, idealist and materialist alike. As opposed to “sovereignty” in Bataille’s sense, *Geist* and its *mastery* [*Herrschaft*] never lose or waste anything—without aim and purpose. *Geist* always, and always consciously, conserves everything that it wants to conserve and thus has no dreams and no unconscious. It never forgets and it never sleeps, and it does not “slip,” as the Freudian unconscious makes us do. Hegel’s economy as the *science* of *Geist* can therefore only be a restricted economy. In general economy, something is always lost; on occasion, just about everything is lost. Perhaps even what is lost is that which, were it not lost, would have been the best, the most necessary, the most effective of what there could be.

One would not want to claim that there is always and unconditionally a loss of value in re-presentation, making ideas or what is still prior to them diminish by virtue of becoming words—spoken or written—or articulated ideas. For, by claiming so one would reestablish one of the most classical forms of restricted economy determined by such claims. Nor, as I pointed out, can one give an unconditional priority to and idealize the practice of loss, whether artistic, theoretical, or political. Loss instead conforms to the economy, by definition general, which must also

engage gain or other possible denominations, either proximate to gain, such as “profit” or “win,” or derived from a different chain, such as consciousness.

In part, the present analysis aims to show that the relationship or complementarity between “consciousness and gain” on the one hand, and “the unconscious and loss” on the other, has shaped, in the shadow of Hegel, our understanding of history, and indeed of virtually everything. Bataille’s point is, once again, that *something* is *always* lost, that “*excesses of energy are produced, which, by definition, cannot be utilized,*” and not that everything is lost. This irreducible loss is different and must be opposed to absolute waste, a concept that would by definition conform to a restricted economy. There are practices—theoretical, interpretive, psychological, social, cultural, or political—that aim at maximizing losses, which have been ignored by the classical theories as restricted economies and to which Bataille, justly, draws attention in the course of his critique. This understanding allows Bataille to argue, against Hegel, that energy can be lost without any aim or meaning, and indeed that some energy must be so lost. Losing with aim or meaning—or rather, for there might be, locally, aim and meaning to losses, with *the* aim or *the* meaning—would imply the *aim* or *meaning* of losing, dis-counting, and would make the interpretive and theoretical process a restricted economy.

Can one in truth practice sovereignty, then? In a certain sense, one always has to practice one form of sovereignty or another; for one always loses—wastes—some energy “without the slightest aim, consequently without any meaning.” But one cannot ever practice only sovereignty even if one wanted to or, in whatever sense, did so as much as possible. To practice only sovereignty is certainly not possible if one sees any practice, interpretive or political, as a general economy. A general economy figures an irreducible complexity underlying any practice, whether the practice of theory in philosophy, literature, criticism, or politics. It equally demands interactive relations between fields and concepts that emerge through these relations, such as the complementarity of history and the unconscious.

Nor, therefore, can one, under the conditions of general economy, claim any form of total or absolute loss. *Something* is always lost, and at any given moment something is lost absolutely, but one can never assess unconditionally the value of this loss. Conditionally, one can at times

assess what is lost and its relative value within either a restricted or a general economy. Gains might prove to be losses, losses gains—or both at once, along different lines. If losses are irreducible, so are gains. But *both* may also be reducible *under certain conditions* in the sense that such cases might not be subject to a description in terms of losses and gains of any kind. In this sense “loss,” “waste,” “expenditure,” and “excess” are provisional terms used in a rhetorical juxtaposition, but as jointly interactive with or complementary to more customary and customarily more desirable “gain,” “conservation,” and “containment.” Strictly speaking, the radical loss at issue in general economy may not be loss at all; that which has been “lost” may never have “been there” before the point at which it appears to have been lost, although such more restricted economic forms of loss do occur, too, and must be accounted for. The general economic “loss” is never present, so that it is there to be found, either as conscious or as unconscious, even though it produces effects such as presence—a recovered present or a recaptured past.

Nor can one claim unconditionally that anything is lost forever; and loss also obeys the principle of joint or complementary interaction, with the resulting relation to gain or recovery. It is quite possible and even likely that certain things are lost forever, from the very beginning, or to be more precise, at the particular moment at which one assesses one's losses. For all absolute beginnings are suspended as a result. It is also quite possible, even likely, and perhaps inevitable that everything eventually will be lost at some point—will die, as it were, or disappear without a trace. Still, we cannot be sure of what or when. General economy makes apparent that unutilizable excesses are produced, but it does not necessarily specify what these will be or how they will be distributed. Both specific losses and loss in general can manifest themselves obliquely.

One of the problems and tasks of general economy is a rigorously theoretical textualization of loss. This textualization, however, can no longer be a representation, or only representation, in the classical sense, but only a relation, by means of oblique and multiply complementary inscriptions, to that which cannot be re-presented—presented *as* present or as deferred presence, as something that has been present somewhere at some point. One must, however, also account for the effects of presence and representation, in part, but only in part, by means of utilizing, in a

non-Hegelian fashion, various restricted economies within a general economy.

That which is lost may be the best, but it may also be the worst; it may be lost forever, it may reemerge one day—or rather simply emerge, should one refer more strictly to the “un-known” losses of general economy. It may never emerge; and strictly speaking, one cannot say that something is there that is lost. The latter more restricted economic form of loss does, as I indicated, occur, but only within certain limits; and the dynamics of production and, at times *as*, *loss* at issue in the question of general economy cannot be contained thereby. To return to the analogy of dreams, we cannot know which dreams will be recalled or which will be lost. We can have only a memory of a dream, which as a “dream” is never consciously present and which is our link to the unconscious—or to what is so designated.

Against Hegel, any project, or anti-project, must always have its share of losses and its “shares” in losses—both those that readily appear to offer themselves to an assessment and those that belong to the rubric of radically, irreducibly “unconscious” loss. These losses cannot be fully assessed, though they will inevitably manifest themselves, but only in part. They will have their effects. Some of these losses may prove to be gains: one’s “shares” in losses may or may not bring dividends; and once again, one cannot do without gains either, one cannot waste absolutely. Conversely, the gains, both assessed or possible to assess and unassessed or impossible to assess, may or may not prove to be losses. Both conditions might prevail at once, or neither one nor the other: the very language of gains and losses is far from being a certain bet. These gains and losses cannot be determined in advance, even though one may account for some of them reasonably well, and often by way of description in such terms as ‘loss’ and ‘gain.’ It is this ineluctable, irreducible indeterminacy that, just as the indeterminacy of quantum physics, demands general economy and complementarity.

### Complementarity

The notion and then the framework or matrix of complementarity was originally developed in quantum physics, where it was introduced by Niels Bohr in 1927 in order to account for and interpret—via *complementarity*—the wave-particle *duality*, the continuous and discon-



tinuous representation of physical processes, the difficulties of a simultaneous determination of coordination and momentum in quantum interactions, and related problems. Bohr's complementarity is thus an attempt both to understand the physical—and meta-physical—meaning of quantum processes and to offer an overall interpretation of them.

Its most fundamental impact is quantum mechanical indeterminacy, expressed mathematically by Heisenberg's uncertainty relations and dynamically by the complementarity of position and momentum. In Bohr's matrix, this indeterminacy becomes the complementarity of coordination, or positionality, and causality, leading to a radical reconsideration of the concepts of observation, involvement in the experiment, and related concepts and configurations. This complementarity dislocates the causal dynamics by means of which the behavior of classical systems is determined and which thus allows one to know with certainty the positions and motion of their elements, such as elementary particles. Or, better, it suspends or deconstructs the *claim* of such causality, defining all classical physics and, we might add, all classical metaphysics. For, both space-time coordination and the claim of causality do have their place and relation in the overall theoretical matrix, but quantum mechanics imposes strict and, it appears, irreducible, limits upon their simultaneous application. In short, quantum mechanics, too, not only deconstructs classical theories but also recomprehends and redelimits them. In his defining formulation, Bohr speaks of "the space-time co-ordination and the claim of causality, the union of which characterizes the classical theories, as *complementary* but exclusive features of the description, symbolizing the idealization of observation and definition respectively."<sup>12</sup>

Bohr's qualification—"symbolizing the idealization of observation and definition respectively"—is crucial. It introduces a decisive feature of complementarity as a theoretical matrix. The features of quantum mechanical descriptions are first complementary—mutually exclusive, but both necessary—and second, are *idealizations*, or metaphorical models. Indeed they are symbolizations of idealizations, metaphors of metaphors. It follows that particles and waves, continuity and discontinuity, position and momentum, coordination and causality, observation and definition, in short all concepts determining the theoretical matrix of quantum mechanics are complex metaphoric conglomerates and idealizations. As such they are, inescapably, shaped by the social, historical, cultural, and

even political conditions of their emergence, even though and in truth because one cannot suspend the mathematical and experimental, including technological, determination of quantum physics and the role this determination plays there and in the natural and exact sciences. The same, of course, is the case with classical physics, and one of the major effects of the quantum mechanical revolution and related developments elsewhere is the transformation of our understanding of physics and science in general. It is true that Kant, or Hume, and Hegel, who gave it a historical dimension, already understood the complexities involved in any process of idealization, and this knowledge in part necessitated Hegel's logic and economy of *Geist*. This history of philosophy, specifically concerning causality, observation, and definition, is reflected in Bohr's formulations and in complementarity itself. More immediate and more closely involved ideas would be those of Husserl and Brentano, whose names were mentioned by physicists and mathematicians at the time of the emergence of the new physics—relativity and quantum theory.

Bohr uses his understanding of the idealizing—symbolic or metaphorical—character of all features and descriptions constituting quantum, or of course classical, physics with great effectiveness throughout his writing. Thus in defining the quantum postulate, originating in Max Planck's law (1900), which introduced the discontinuous, quantum character of light alongside its continuous character, Bohr writes: "the . . . quantum postulate . . . attributes to any atomic process an essential discontinuity, or rather individuality, completely foreign to the classical theories and *symbolized* by Planck's quantum of action" (*ATDN*, 53; emphasis added). Conjoining "essential discontinuity" with "individuality" connotes a radical dislocation of classical causality, eventually leading to quantum mechanics and complementarity. Discontinuity—the quantum of action—becomes a symbolization necessitated by this dislocation of causality, by the "individual" character of any quantum event. Bohr's matrix, thus, puts in question and finally abandons all metaphysical realism—physical, mathematical, or other—without, however, making complementarity an idealist or subjectivist theory. In short, in present terms, it makes Bohr's complementarity a general economy.

Complementarity analogously recomprehends other dualities and multiplicities of quantum physics—such as waves and particles or continuous and discontinuous processes—as mutually exclusive but necessary fea-

tures of quantum mechanical descriptions, and it relates these specific complementarities within the overall matrix. These complementarities, it is worth noting, are connected within the framework of quantum physics by way of indeterminacy or probability. Probabilities, spreading like waves, can be gauged; the "picture" itself is never fully predictable. The complementarity of coordination and causality may well be the most decisive, however. It is, as indicated earlier, correlative to Heisenberg's uncertainty relations, which are a rigorous mathematical expression of the limits on the possibility of *simultaneous* exact measurement of such complementary variables as position and momentum, or time and energy.

David Bohm's formulation of the complementarity principle spells out the correlation with uncertainty relations more directly than Bohr's original definition cited earlier: "At the quantum level, the most general physical properties of any system must be expressed in terms of complementary pairs of variables, each of which can be better defined only at the expense of a corresponding loss in the degree of definition of the other" (*Quantum Theory*, 160).

This formulation, although not Bohm's interpretation of quantum mechanics itself, suggests the general economic character of complementarity more immediately than Bohr's definition because it directly points to a radical loss in representation in any quantum configuration. As opposed to classical theories or restricted economies, general economy must, we recall, deal with the fact that irrecoverable losses in interpretation and theory do take place and that one must relate one's interpretation and theory to such losses.

As we have just seen, in Bohr's theory this relation immediately manifests itself at the very general level of representation and interpretation. It is a decisive and revolutionary feature of complementarity that the very relationships between description and event—and the very notions, classically conceived, of event or object and of description or of interpretation themselves—are subjected to a radical reinterpretation and what we now call deconstruction. Description and event, or again corresponding idealizations, in turn become reciprocal and complementary. The quantum events or what are classically seen or idealized as events become what may be called effects without causes, or effects not subject to classical, restricted economies of causality. Instead, such "effects" should be seen as being produced by a kind of general economic 'efficacy' in the sense delineated earlier.

Bohr offers many brilliant and precise formulations rendering and accounting for these complexities and a general framework that extends well beyond the domain of quantum physics; and as his ideas develop, Bohr speaks of broader, indeed very general, implications of “the peculiar reciprocal uncertainty that affects all measurement of atomic quantities.” For “the *complementary* nature of the description appearing in this uncertainty is unavoidable already in an analysis of *the most elementary concepts employed in interpreting experience*” (ATDN, 57; emphasis added).

Complementarity itself may, obviously, be defined in very general terms and may function well beyond physics; the present study aims to explore and extend these possibilities.<sup>13</sup> It is crucial, however, that it is “the very nature of the quantum theory [that] forces us” to introduce complementarity. “Indeed, in the description of atomic phenomena, the quantum postulate presents us with the task of developing a ‘complementarity’ theory the consistency of which can be judged only by weighing the possibilities of definition and observation” (ATDN, 55). In physics, the possibilities at issue refer both to experimental configurations, where quantum effects manifest themselves, and to the mathematical formalism, specifically Heisenberg’s uncertainty relations, that accommodates them. Both space-time coordination and the claim of causality have their place in the new matrix, just as waves and particles do. But they can never be applied in full measure simultaneously.<sup>14</sup> Their unity, characterizing classical theory, must be reconceived as complementarity, alongside, conversely, a *connecting* complementarity of particles and waves, or continuity and discontinuity, whose components are separate in classical theory.

Quantum mechanical complementarity demands, thus, a radical critique of classical concepts, models, and frameworks, and the entire processes and technologies of measurement and observation, and while not their wholesale replacement, a redefinition of their functioning and limits. The resulting matrix both offers a critique or deconstruction of classical concepts and indicates a certain closure of these concepts, within which closure it makes the functioning of classical concepts and models *complementary*, and within rigorously defined limits, *necessarily* complementary. The resulting interpretive and conceptual economy, however, also approaches and necessitates a general economy. Bohr’s own matrix comes very close to it, closer perhaps than that of anyone else before him, with the exception of Nietzsche.

The wave-particle complementarity will not be seen as primary, *causing* the uncertainty relations and the complementarity of coordination and momentum, although Bohr might initially have seen it in this way. Instead, such complementarities as waves and particles, continuity and discontinuity, coordination and momentum, or again the complementarities of corresponding idealizations become effects of the efficacy that cannot be seen in classical causal terms as defined earlier. These effects are often interactive: waves are related, although not identical, to continuity, and particles to discontinuity; continuity is related to causality. But no single complementarity can be seen as holding an unconditional experimental or theoretical primacy. Whatever is observed, measured, or interpreted can be seen only in the same general economic terms of effects without classical causes, however conceived—as open or hidden, interpretable or uninterpretable. Analogous, perhaps even isomorphic, to Derrida's or, earlier, Nietzsche's theories, Bohr's complementarity suggests, specifically against Einstein but with powerful consequences elsewhere in physics and beyond, that no mathematical, conceptual, or metaphorical model—continuous, as Einstein would want, discontinuous, or complementarily continuous and discontinuous—can be assigned the status of physical reality. The very concept of physical reality, or reality, to begin with, becomes problematized and deconstructed in the process. Complementarity, once again, spells the end of mathematical, physical, and all other realism, along with all idealism, hitherto.

This dislocation or again deconstruction of classical theory was, of course, a major vexation for Einstein, who, in the popular rendition of his objection, did not believe, unlike Mallarmé, that God would be throwing dice in that way. Einstein understood profoundly the necessity of statistical behavior in the case of large ensembles, and made important contributions to the physics, including the quantum physics, of such ensembles. It is only that all quantum ensembles or rather the ensembles necessary for a rigorous and comprehensive account of quantum data, are irreducibly large, in fact infinite, even in the case of a single particle—an expression that itself acquires a very different meaning in quantum theory.

As Bohr is very careful to point out, space-time as four-dimensional space-time in Einstein's relativity is a unity, not a complementarity. It is a unified continuum, given mathematical grounds by Minkowski and ear-

lier by Riemann, whose geometry is the basis of general relativity. If anything, as a unity it is rather close, metaphorically, to the Hegelian *Aufhebung*. Whether it can be such a unity, conceptually or metaphorically, is a very different matter. Referring, via *différance*, to the spatiality of space and the temporality of time and, conversely, also to the temporality of space and the spatiality of time, Derrida suggests a general economic, and finally undecidable, relation that neither absolutely separates nor absolutely unifies or synthesizes space and time. As shall be seen presently, such relations demand a kind of generalized complementarity making them both heterogeneously interactive and interactively heterogeneous.

In fact, in contrast to Einstein's relativity, which remains a classical theory in this sense, quantum physics has a kind of built-in affinity with Derrida's matrix of *trace*, *différance*, and *writing*. In relating to any quantum mechanical observables, one deals only with traces and indeed traces of traces—the photographs of the traces left by particles. The process thus graphically exemplifies Derrida's understanding of all interpretive and theoretical processes, by virtue of which “[n]othing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present or absent. There only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces” (*Positions*, 26; *Positions*, 38). Derrida's theoretical economy was developed more directly via Nietzsche's ideas, Freud's matrix of memory traces, and Bataille's general economy, but it was very likely influenced, as Bataille's conceptions were, by modern physics as well. For, in quantum mechanics, too, “nothing is . . . simply present or absent” and there only, everywhere, differences, traces and traces of traces. Even when one observes such traces “directly,” they are already such “photographs” and traces of traces—always already delayed or deferred and different from themselves—produced by means of the efficacy of a kind of quantum *différance*.

Naturally, trace is itself a metaphor that may only very imperfectly relate to what is going on and to the difference within the “process itself.” The quantum mechanical complementarity is a rendition, itself necessarily metaphorical, of what Nietzsche calls “first metaphor,” by which we relate to “initial” perceptions, in “Über Wahrheit und Lüge im ausser-moralischen Sinne [On Truth and Falsity in the Extra-Moral sense].”<sup>15</sup>

The essay, in general, has played a key role on the poststructuralist scene. Derrida's "Différance" may in fact be seen as a kind of translation of it into a more technical formalism and calculus of *différance*.

In the case of quantum mechanics, the process and resulting metaphorization must of course proceed by way of quantum experiments, which determine, although never absolutely, how the particles-waves are observed and what is involved in the process. It is an immense conglomerate, an ensemble of complementarities and complementarities of complementarities—experimental, mathematical, technological, conceptual, and metaphorical, as well as political, from the internal, or more or less internal, politics of science to geopolitics. These interactions, either within or among different domains, must, however, be conceived of both complementarily and general economically, as opposed to restricted economies, Hegelian or other, which would fully, without loss, account for, integrate, or control such interactions.

Under the conditions of complementarity, then, there is no full conceptual or causal synthesis, although, alongside mutual exclusivity, there may be relations between different counterparts, such as particles and waves or coordination and causality. The possibility of such relations at various levels demands in fact a generalization of complementarity beyond designating mutually exclusive relationships; and such a generalization is in fact found already in Bohr. I shall comment on this issue and offer specific definitions shortly. My point at the moment is that the absence of classical, Hegelian synthesis remains a decisive—defining—feature of complementarity. This suspension of a grounding synthesis is a crucial and profoundly anti-Hegelian idea, marking the proximity of complementarity to the history of general economy from Nietzsche to Bataille to Derrida.

The structure of the underlying dynamics or efficacy producing complementary features may be seen as finally undecidable. Or, better, there is no one, single structure defining these dynamics once and for all—decidable or undecidable, known or unknown, nameable or unnameable. By the same token, one cannot speak of this efficacy as underlying in the sense of being absolutely primary to or a cause of the complementary effects. The relationships themselves between certain complementary features may become conceptually or metaphorically undecidable or apore-

tic, which undecidability enables a deconstruction of a corresponding text or configuration. But there are also possibilities and necessities of local determinations, for example, by means of complementary conjunctions.

To a degree in contrast to mathematics and physics, conceptually or metaphorically one can thereby suggest a relation between complementarity and undecidability, taking the latter term broadly and metaphorically. Such an economy of undecidability was developed by Derrida, as a general economy, by analogy with Gödelian undecidability in mathematical logic. Derrida addresses Gödelian thematics starting with his earliest work on Husserl. Most directly, undecidability is played out in *Dissemination*, first via Mallarmé in “The Double Session [La Double séance]” and then in Derrida’s reading of Sollers’s *Nombres* in “Dissemination.” Derrida’s definition of undecidability actually places the latter in the Hegelian, or anti-Hegelian, context by juxtaposing undecidability to synthesis: “An undecidable proposition (Gödel demonstrated such a possibility in 1931) is a proposition which, given a system of axioms governing a multiplicity, is neither an analytical nor a deductive consequence of those axioms, nor in contradiction with them, neither true nor false with respect to those axioms. *Tertium datur*, without synthesis” (*Dissemination*, 219; *La Dissémination*, 248; translation modified).

The project of deconstruction may be seen as an exploration of the undecidability between the classical philosophical oppositions—such as mind and nature, nature and culture, concept and intuition, consciousness and the unconscious, and so forth—claimed as decidable by philosophy. At the very least, philosophy would always claim that such undecidability or indeterminacy can be controlled—controlled by philosophy.<sup>16</sup>

The thematics of indeterminacy and of quantum physics have also affected Derrida’s framework, in part through Bataille. The character, or style, of Derrida’s project, however, is defined much more by the economy of undecidability. Deconstruction is *oriented* toward, but is not reducible to, the analysis of undecidable or aporetic configurations, at times by way of complementarities structured around the thematics of undecidability. Many of Derrida’s readings may be seen or metaphorized as the analyses of undecidability and the construction of undecidable propositions, and overall as a kind of incompleteness theorem of philosophy and its closure.

One could, in fact, suggest here a difference in orientation between two



anti-Hegelian theoretical projects—Derrida's deconstruction and the complementary analysis pursued by the present study. The difference between them may be defined by way of their relations to the two respective metaphorical models or paradigms: one based on the *undecidability* of Gödel's theorem and the other on the *complementarity* of quantum physics—in the latter case under the condition of and in relation to the *indeterminacy* of interpretation. In a given case, particularly in a metaphorically extrapolated matrix, such indeterminacy may imply or be linked to various forms of undecidability between descriptive terms. Undecidability deals with the question of the truth and (in)completeness of the systems of formal, mathematical logic and metaphorically *analogous* configurations in the field of philosophy. Complementarity, as defined here, deals with the production and operation of theoretical matrices under the conditions of indeterminacy and of descriptive complementary features involved. In the case of complementarity, that the structure is undecidable is less important than that it has complementary effects. In this sense, even the duality of particles and waves of the quantum mechanical picture is less important than the complementarity of organization it implies and the way that this complementarity can be extended to larger clusters, theories, histories, or other conglomerates—such as history and theory. The conditions of indeterminacy or final undecidability or loss in representation—the conditions of general economy—do, however, remain crucial to complementarity as a theoretical economy. In part complementarity is a response to these conditions.

Conversely, new theoretical matrices are generated within the Derridean project or projects as well, alongside and *by means of* exposing the undecidability of the theses of philosophy, above all the thesis of thesis itself, within what Derrida calls the movement of a-thesis.<sup>17</sup> This movement locates the space or the interval of undecidability as *différance* and *dissemination*, *but is not restricted to it*. Thus the process also locates and introduces, specifically as *writing* in Derrida's sense, new economies of interpretation, history, or literature. At issue, thus, is not an unequivocal or unalterable opposition between complementarity and (Derrida's) deconstruction, but a complex play of differences and proximities in emphasis, strategies, and goals. A radical suspension of Hegelian synthesis remains a decisive feature of both approaches and of the interaction between them.

It may in fact be argued that the impossibility of a metaphysical conceptual synthesis is at the heart of the argument between Bohr and Einstein around quantum indeterminacy and complementarity. Einstein recognized that quantum mechanics or complementarity was a rigorous and effective theory insofar as both its mathematical formalism and its ability to account for experimental data are concerned. He thought that it would continue to have its place as a partial account when the true *complete* theory, free of uncertainty, was discovered. Einstein resisted, and in fact rejected, quantum mechanics and complementarity primarily on the grounds of their incapacity to offer a complete conceptual synthesis, as he understood it. Einstein's understanding of conceptual synthesis and, thus, of the completeness of a given theory was classical or metaphysical and, in the end, Hegelian, although various aspects of Einstein's attitude can be traced to Kant, Hume, Spinoza, and other sources. Hegel's philosophy can actually be seen as critically subsuming the preceding philosophical economies of synthesis. Einstein's understanding of the completeness of theory was based on his metaphysical attitudes. Bohr argued very effectively that quantum mechanics is a complete theory; that is, it is as complete as a theory can be under the conditions of quantum indeterminacy and complementarity. These are of course the conditions of irreducible incompleteness. But, which is Bohr's point, this incompleteness would equally characterize all other theories available; and they could, therefore, be no more complete than quantum mechanics; indeed they are less so. Bohr therefore saw these conditions of indeterminacy, incompleteness, and complementarity as ineluctable constraints imposed upon physics by the structure of matter, insofar as the latter term or idealization can be used under the same constraints.

Einstein, actually, wanted to achieve a synthesis in terms of a mathematical and conceptual or metaphysical, and specifically causal, continuum, in the shadow of Newton and Maxwell. As Einstein wrote on Maxwell in 1931: "Since Maxwell's time, Physical Reality has been thought of as represented by *continuous fields* . . . not capable of any mechanical interpretation. This change in the conception of Reality is *the most profound and the most fruitful* that physics has experienced since the time of Newton" (*James Clerk Maxwell*, 66; emphasis added).<sup>18</sup> The "Newton" referred to here is, on one hand, the theory of *particles*—and of the *continuous* motion of *discrete* particles<sup>19</sup>—and on the other, New-

ton's optics—again a corpuscular rather than a wave theory of light. As Pais comments: "No consequence of the new theory was more profound than the unification of light with electromagnetism: light is composed of electromagnetic waves. No part of the new theory appeared to be better understood than the wave nature of light as it travels through empty space. Consequently no part of the old quantum theory appeared more dubious than Einstein's idea that under certain circumstances light behaves as if it has particle structure" (*Inward Bound*, 244).

Einstein himself, "the godfather of complementarity" insofar as physics was concerned (*Inward Bound*, 248), clearly sought this unity, in physical and in philosophical terms, through the idea of continuity and the continuum that worked so well for him in relativity. In this he remained a classicist, a Newtonian physicist and philosopher—metaphysicist and metaphysician—or, thinking also in terms of cosmology, history, as it were, Kantian and Hegelian, or Spinozist.<sup>20</sup> This agenda in Einstein is of course a commonplace of the modern history of science, including in relation to Einstein's encounters with Bohr and Born, for both of whom it was in fact quite helpful in shaping their ideas concerning complementarity.<sup>21</sup> This agenda remains very important, however, all the more so because what Einstein resisted to an even greater extent was *complementarity* and the matrix as a whole. For complementarity prohibits conceptual synthesis in any form available hitherto, whether in the field of physics or in the field of metaphysics or philosophy—from Socrates, or before him, to Heidegger, via Hegel, justifying Bohr's remark made in 1962 in his final interview with Thomas Kuhn: "I think that it would be reasonable to say that no man who is called a philosopher really understands what is meant by the complementary descriptions."<sup>22</sup>

It is true, of course, that Maxwell's revolution was also a transformation of Newtonian mechanics, a transformation from the physics of discontinuous—but mathematically described in terms of the continuum as differential—calculus, to the physics of differential equations in continuous fields. Thus classical physics is itself not so easily defined. This difficulty of definition is even more to the point, however; for, as was noted earlier, Newtonian physics has a problem in this sense, a built-in hidden complementarity, as it were, which is removed by Maxwell's theory as a theory of continuous fields. In fact the quantum theories that appealed to Einstein most, for mathematical and conceptual reasons,

were those, such as Schrödinger's and de Broglie's, that were thought and formulated along the lines of waves and continuous fields rather than particles, and that anticipated the possibility of synthesis in terms of the continuum. The continuum as synthesis was Einstein's main agenda, both in terms of physics and mathematics and conceptually.

Let me stress that Einstein thought that quantum mechanics would have its place as a statistical theory, based on incomplete information about quantum systems, or what it construes as quantum systems, within a larger mathematical and conceptual matrix along the *lines* of the continuum. The statistics, however, as indeterminacy and as complementarity, appear to be intrinsic to such systems. The statistical indeterminacy encountered by quantum physics is a law of nature—a “law” of “nature”—that must always be factored in and that has productively shaped all modern physics ever since. This law radically undermines the very notion of completeness—of theory and system, here as a theoretical, experimental, conceptual, metaphoric, and political economy of physics. Such is the case even for the one-particle systems, except that one can no more speak of *one* particle than of a complete system, or of one system at any point. It is, then, complementarity at all levels that Einstein resisted most.

Einstein's efforts, quite heroic, to reinstate “the continuum,” physically, philosophically, and historically, may even be seen as a kind of Hegelian overcoming of discontinuity and rupture, both within the kind of theory he wanted and in the history of physics.<sup>23</sup> Bohr, conversely, may be seen as one of the greatest revolutionaries in this century's intellectual history and one of the most anti-Hegelian thinkers, very much like Nietzsche. Bohr speaks of the “epistemological lesson” of quantum mechanics, although “anti-epistemological lesson” may be a better phrase. These implications will be developed in the course of this study. Here I shall comment, briefly and for purposes of illustration, on the parallels emerging in the context of historical description and analysis.

Uncertainty relations may be seen as mathematically describing the processes, ineluctable in all quantum interactions, that inhibit information about some components of a given system, if one wants to increase information about other components—such as time against energy or position against momentum. Uncertainty relations signal a mutual inhibition between causality and coordination. As a result, one needs comple-

mentarity between them in order to produce a comprehensive analytical matrix. By analogy, historical accounts must often oscillate between a comprehensive description of a given configuration of events, or differences and forces involved, and causal or efficacious relations between them.<sup>24</sup> An attempt to describe both or to analyze them comprehensively would inhibit each. Such descriptions are further complicated and inhibited, but never fully created, by the historical position—psychological, ideological, cultural, political, or economic—of a given historian. This configuration is analogous to, although far more complicated than, the position of the observer inhibiting, but again not creating, the results of observation and measurement in quantum mechanics. The latter leads to uncertainty relations in Heisenberg's analysis and, in Bohr's interpretation, to complementarity.

One can more generally describe the historical process by way of quantum mechanical metaphors, now using quantum "histories" rather than only "events." Such a description can in turn be juxtaposed to a classical, let us say, post-Hegelian picture of history, metaphorically analogous to classical physics. Thus, proceeding against Thomas S. Kuhn, and combining and complementarizing the mechanical metaphor with the classical ones, the contemporary physicist Werner Israel writes on the history of the discovery of "dark matter," such as neutron stars, black holes, and the like:

It is not easy to detect in this story anything that often resembles the Kuhnian cycle of paradigm and revolution. Rather, one sees a meandering path that resolves into a Brownian motion at the microlevel of individual scientists. Perhaps it is not altogether flippant to suggest that the evolutionary picture that naturally presents itself is of a substantially classical motion (but with considerable quantum spread) that arises by constructive interference from a probing of all possible paths, very occasionally interrupted by barrier tunneling at places where the incident current becomes sufficiently large. Whether this motion will ultimately approach a fixed point or limit cycle, and whether there is more than one, are questions for future generations. ("Dark Stars: The Evolution of an Idea," *Three Hundred Years of Gravitation*, 200)<sup>25</sup>

One doubts whether future generations will be able to make an easy decision; instead, they may well offer a still more complex economy of

history. Histories of such ideas and all history indeed do not lack a “substantially classical motion,” but acquire “considerable quantum spread.” Brownian motion is an excellent metaphor here, but only if one keeps in mind that the process, as Einstein was the first to demonstrate,<sup>26</sup> combines both classical and quantum effects, classical and quantum statistics. Metaphorized only through the classical statistical theory of Brownian motion, the “picture” of history would not be rich enough and would not transform the classical picture of history radically enough.

As in constructing quantum pictures, in historical analysis one can either establish—describe—the positions of events or establish connections between them; furthermore, either alternative can be accomplished only within certain limits of probability. Similarly, one must oscillate between focusing on the local structure of historical events or on building claims of causal relations among those events. The import of this principle for history is clear, but its implications are seldom grasped fully and they have so far affected relatively little the practice of historical analysis, even in the wake of poststructuralist or postmodernist developments. It offers, however, an immediate illustration of reciprocal conceptual relations and metaphoric traffic. The relationship between the observer and the observed system has been persistently cited in modern intellectual history, and specifically in the context of the theory of history and the practice of historiography and historical analysis. One can also reverse the metaphor and suggest that a quantum mechanical description is also a history of a quantum mechanical event or sequence of events.

One can invoke here Heisenberg’s microscope of history, which is a thought experiment he constructed in order to explain uncertainty relations. According to Heisenberg’s reasoning, in order to measure the position of an electron with sufficient accuracy one would need to illuminate it with light of a very short wave length and to observe the reflected light in a microscope. Since the resolving power of the lens of the microscope is limited, the wavelength of the light would have to be as short as that of gamma radiation. The interaction of an electron with gamma rays, however, would discontinuously change the momentum of the electron, which would make our knowledge of the momentum of the electron uncertain. The strict causality in determining the electron’s motion—its “history”—would thereby be prohibited. One can offer likewise a literary model of such a microscope—Proust’s, in which the finest possible graining of the

“events,” or rather the lens of perspective, destroys the possibilities of perceiving causal connections.<sup>27</sup> The lens of history can never be fully focused; and as in photography, we may also need to change the lens. The metaphor, however, describes the built-in conditions of nature and, even more so, of history. In quantum mechanics and its “history,” or in conventional history and its “quantum mechanics,” there can be no undisturbed history, which could then be disturbed by observation. Or rather, since to a degree such distortions take place, too, they may be seen, provisionally, as secondary distortion, added or rather superimposed upon the structural distortion that prohibits one from speaking of an undisturbed history or of matter existing independently of interpretation.

One might further illustrate the situation by recalling the philosopher who powerfully influenced Einstein’s thinking, namely Spinoza. The topic would merit a separate discussion, of course, even on the subject of continuity alone, which is at the core of the Bohr-Einstein debate and which I shall consider later in this study. Even Spinoza’s professional occupation of lens polishing, of which Einstein thought so highly,<sup>28</sup> was also a process of production of continuums as surfaces of polished lenses. The shapes are in fact two-dimensional Riemann manifolds, whose four-dimensional versions are the model for Einstein’s general relativity. The process, naturally, lends itself as a metaphor for sharpening one’s philosophical vision, an insight that neither Spinoza nor Einstein would have missed. As the Heisenberg microscope was to show, however, and as the *lens* of an actual microscope would reveal, the “surface”—experimental and theoretical, or historical—can never be polished enough, in practice or in principle. It can never be fully continuous, but only quantum, complementary—a manifold of complementarities—although as a part of theory all sorts of continuums, mathematical, conceptual, or metaphorical, must be engaged. There is no instrument—*theoretical*: conceptual or metaphorical; or *practical*: technological or political; or a joint force of all these—that would enable us to polish things enough, to smooth them into a continuum. There is no continuum within which continuity and breaks, or localization and causalities, or any connections, can ultimately be unified. The rupture cannot be overcome, but there is no absolute discontinuity between them, either. They are complementary. Such optics or illusions can enable us to offer good approximations along certain *lines*, such as coordination or, conversely, causality; or at certain

points, to use such models effectively; or to “experience” the presence of the continuum, and the continuum as presence, for a brief period of time; or to believe in such an experience; or to generate beliefs and claims of that type. Heisenberg’s microscope or similar optics elsewhere, in Nietzsche for example,<sup>29</sup> make us see better, although one might also claim, as Einstein did, that such microscopes do not provide clear enough vision.

Quantum theory describes, and argues that it is only possible to describe, specific events under specific experimental conditions where classical notions and measurements are constrained by uncertainty relations and the complementarity of representations involved. The latter establish rigorous limits prohibiting one from obtaining the full classical data, no matter what the precision of the experiment. Indeed, *this indeterminacy increases*, rather than diminishes, with the increase in precision of classical measurement. Against Einstein’s demands and those of many others—physicists and philosophers alike—or their desires as to what the nature or structure of reality should be, this irreducible disturbance prohibits one from speaking of “reality,” “events,” “history,” or whatever can be represented as independent of the conditions of interpretation—that which can have independent *presence*. Observation and experiment are already interpretive “events”—mediated by theory, technology, psychology, history, ideology, politics, and many other things, in fact, by a definitionally open list—even though they are also variously constrained, with different degrees of rigor, in turn operating differently in different fields. A more radical economy of difference becomes necessary—a general economy. The latter enables one to inscribe or relate to a difference that is radical, but not absolute—a radical yet reciprocal difference. This “reciprocity” of difference has been one of Bohr’s major points. Bohr criticized Heisenberg’s initial illustration of the uncertainty principle via Heisenberg’s microscope, which reduces this complexity by implying that there can be quantum processes in themselves and by themselves, independent of experiment and interpretation.

History offers many immediate analogies and parallels and an extraordinary possibility to apply complementarity as a matrix and the metaphorical models it generates. The framework of complementarity as conceived by Bohr is much broader, however, and more profound and revolutionary in its implications, both in the field of physics and in more general conceptual and metaphoric terms. Complementarity must itself



be understood as a trope, a metaphor or a metaphorical model, or better, a catachrestic model. Catachresis is a figure whose constituents are in turn metaphors. According to Roland Barthes's elegant rendition: "There is one rhetorical figure which fills [the] blank in the object of comparison whose existence is altogether transferred to the language of the object to which it is compared: catachresis (there is no other possible word to denote the 'wings' of a house, or the 'arms' of a chair, and yet 'wings' and 'arms' are *instantly, already* metaphorical): a basic figure, more basic perhaps than metonymy, since it speaks around an empty object of comparison . . ." (*S/Z*, 34).

As follows from Derrida's analysis, most specifically in "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" (in *Margins*), every metaphor is inscribed in a catachrestic chain or network. It is always already a catachresis, connoting at the limit a radical *différance* and *dissemination* within any metaphor. An accompanying deconstructive understanding of metaphor as the relation simultaneously of similarity and difference between its constituent elements suggests that there is complementarity both in specific metaphors and in metaphor as a concept. Conversely, complementarity holds the potential for constructing new metaphors. Catachresis, too, may be understood as arranging its metaphoric constituents by way of complementarities and complementarities of complementarities in the broader sense of the present study.

Complementarity in this sense entails the necessity of accounting for the joint operation of pairs or clusters of concepts or extended frameworks—such as, most importantly for this study, history and the unconscious, history and matter, the unconscious and matter, or indeed their triple complementarity; or more conventional pairs such as consciousness and the unconscious, continuities and breaks, unities and multiplicities, permanence and transformations, and so forth. Such complementary components, to extend Bohr's definition, may or may not be mutually exclusive, but whether they are mutually exclusive or not, they are always jointly necessary for a comprehensive description and analysis. Complementary relations may thus be described as heterogeneously interactive and interactively heterogeneous—at times acting jointly, at times complementarily, at times conflicting with or inhibiting each other, at times mutually exclusive—but never allowing for a full classical synthesis. Instead complementarity so understood entails a potential for a

radical multiplication—*dissemination*—and rearrangement—recomplementarization—of structures engaged by its theoretical economy as a general economy.

All classical forms of synthesis, or conversely of antithesis, must be deconstructed and rigorously suspended in the sense discussed earlier, which is to say that, to the extent that they can be retained, they must be refigured and redelimited in general economic and complementary terms. In the process, complementarity must often join classically incompatible concepts or, conversely, disengage classically joined concepts or employ a parallel processing of both types of transformation—deidealization and deconstruction—of classical configurations.

More generally, however, the parallel processing that complementarity requires may proceed either in conjunction with various deconstructions, for example, in Derrida's or Nietzsche's sense, or not. Such complementary relations or determinations may, as we have seen, emerge as undecidable, which undecidability enables the deconstruction of a corresponding text or configuration where they are produced. Complementarity, however, allows for a very broad spectrum of parallel and interactive engagements of theoretical structures.

Complementarity can be applied to any conjunction or clustering, double or multiple, of terms and concepts, or again neither terms nor concepts. Most complementarities addressed by this study will relate to the efficacies—such as Derrida's *différance*, Bataille's sovereignty, or Nietzsche's play—that cannot be seen or named as concepts in any of the classical senses of this term, such as in Hegel or Saussure. As a result, such complementarities must be seen and dealt with as complementarities of complementarities.

Complementarity may also be extended to the complementarities of entire theoretical matrices or even fields or other forms of enclosure. Such an extension is in fact inevitable, although it may be merely implicit in a given case; for no term, concept, or cluster can exist otherwise than as it is inserted into a given conceptual chain or matrix—and often into networks of chains and matrices or fields that are complementary in the present sense. One can, therefore, and often must, practice the complementarity of interpretation and history, history and theory, theory and literature, literature and politics, theory and criticism; and all of these may also operate in multiple complementary conjunctions. The comple-

mentary functioning just described may often be simultaneous, but, against Hegel, it does not, or not always, proceed by way of synthesis or within a uniformly or globally controlled system or process, or a system-process, as in Hegel. To borrow Bohm's formulation, which must, however, be expanded beyond the specific and more limited array of variables operative in physics, such as position, momentum, energy, and so forth, "a given system is capable, in principle, of demonstrating an infinite variety of properties that cannot all exist in simultaneously well-defined forms . . . [and] is potentially capable of an endless variety of transformations in which the old categories figuratively dissolve, to be replaced by new categories that cut across the old ones" (*Quantum Theory*, 160–61).

It follows from the preceding discussion that, strictly considered, one can no longer speak of one system under these conditions. Otherwise, one cannot exceed Hegel radically enough, although Hegel's system, such as *Geist* or the Idea, is able, or rather is claimed to be able, to maintain an infinite variety of properties, all well defined.<sup>30</sup>

Complementary constituents so defined are not always mutually exclusive, as in Bohr's definition cited earlier. At a certain level, however, the same is the case in Bohr's complementarity perceived, as it must be, as a general matrix or overall interpretation of quantum phenomena. Complementarities may be also be multiple rather than only paired, which may well be the case with different and multiply related complementary pairs in quantum mechanics—waves and particles, continuity and discontinuity, coordination and causality. This complementary multiplicity is extremely important, for it allows one to exceed the binary without simply or uncritically dispensing with it or ignoring its powerful resources.

This study also supplements complementarity by general economy, or configures both jointly. As I have stressed from the outset, however, it may be argued that Bohr's matrix conforms to the conditions of general economy as well. One could in fact say that Bohr's complementarity, as a matrix, and general economy necessitate each other and may be said to be parts of the same economy, except that such an economy is never itself the same. The anti-epistemology and anti-ontology of complementarity are general economic. As such they allow for a radical deconstruction of both classical epistemology and classical ontology, upon which much of the philosophy and ideology determining classical physics was in fact often

based, for example in Einstein. While, therefore, there are multiple complementary relations between them, complementarity and general economy themselves are not strictly complementary. They always operate together. One can credit Bohr with introducing general economy in the field of science and thus with being, in contrast to Einstein, a profoundly anti-Hegelian thinker.

While perhaps less direct, the impact of the major ideas of modern science, particularly quantum theories, and mathematics, particularly Gödel's theorem, may well be as powerful in both Bataille and Derrida as that of Nietzsche's ideas. In historical terms, Bataille develops and refines his notion of general economy more or less simultaneously with Bohr's development and refinement of complementarity. Bataille was in fact greatly influenced by the results and ideas of modern physics, which Bohr interprets by way of complementarity, conceived, once again, as a kind of a general economy. Undoubtedly, Bohr's debate with Einstein, which was so crucial for Bohr in developing and refining complementarity, affected Bataille's thinking as well, possibly indirectly but nevertheless powerfully. Bataille often comments on developments in modern physics and modern mathematics, especially on the question of the foundation of mathematics; and these ideas profoundly affect his thinking, conceptually, metaphorically, and terminologically.<sup>31</sup> Similar claims can be made concerning Derrida's discourse, both by virtue of its proximity to Bataille at many crucial points, particularly general economy, and in its own terms, specifically in Derrida's "translation" of Gödel's theorem into a general economy of deconstructive undecidability.

In general, both Nietzsche and modern science and mathematics, often simultaneously, had a major impact on most thinkers defining the landscape of modern intellectual history, such as Freud, Husserl, Heidegger, Lacan, Adorno, Deleuze, and Foucault. Indeed, it is difficult to think of exceptions, although the specific implications of Bohr's thinking have not been explored either by these major thinkers or in the related secondary literature and, until quite recently, not even very much in the literature on Bohr himself. There are a variety of reasons for this relative neglect, perhaps most significantly the complexity of the relationships between modern science and philosophy or other theoretical aspects of human sciences, which affects each field as much as the interaction between fields. The functioning of such frameworks as complementarity, consid-

ered as specific interpretations of experimental results and in relation to mathematical formalism in physics, is quite different from their operation in the human sciences; in the latter context, the difference in such general interpretation is less important. Different physicists, such as Bohr, Heisenberg, and Pauli, employ quite different “philosophical” and metaphoric frameworks to interpret quantum mechanics.

The differences between the two fields are, of course, not simple or unequivocal, and the differences between different interpretations in the field of physics often have substantial impact. One should rigorously adhere, however, to the limits of such analogies and metaphoric transfers between various fields. If its implications are taken fully, Bohr’s thinking, especially complementarity as a theoretical matrix or economy—a general economy—is as extraordinary in its general implications as it is in the specific field of quantum physics. In this sense, the present study explores the metaphors and the metaphoricity, as structure or economy, operative in modern—or postmodern—mathematics and science,<sup>32</sup> and further, drawing on the conceptual richness of both, their impact on the modern history of the human sciences, and specifically on modern attitudes toward history itself. These latter relations are in turn multiply reciprocal and multiply complementary.

The three major lines of inquiry which open this study—the question of history, general economy and complementarity, and the role of modern science in modern intellectual history—may now be presented in terms of complementarity. Moreover, these lines may themselves be seen as multiply reciprocal or, better, as interactive and complementary, against but in the shadow of Hegel.

*First*, complementarity allows one to formulate a different attitude toward and a different understanding of history, specifically in its complementarity with the unconscious, thus also responding to the limitation of historical modes of interpretation and analysis.

*Second*, complementarity is applicable to far more than history. In great measure, complementarity allows one to summarize, or *complementarize*, the fundamental import of poststructuralist theory against, but in the shadow of, Hegel.

*Third*, this matrix places both Hegel and poststructuralism into a different perspective, suggesting a kind of parallel-opposition of two developments—from Descartes to Newton to Hegel, via Leibniz and

Kant, on the one hand; and, on the other, in the shadow of Hegel, from Nietzsche to Bohr to Bataille and Derrida, via Freud and Heidegger. One may even argue, as to a degree Roger Penrose does,<sup>33</sup> that, in the field of science, Newton was the first to think in complementary terms, given that he maintained simultaneously the continuous understanding of all physical processes, via differential calculus, and the corpuscular, that is, the discontinuous nature of light. The discovery of the quantum nature or the structure of matter in modern physics, together with Gödel's results concerning undecidability and incompleteness in formal logic, arguably constitute the two greatest transformations of scientific and, more generally, of theoretical thinking in this century. As such, they play a role analogous to Newton's calculus and physics in the preceding intellectual history, although developments in modern biology, computer technology, and telecommunications have also played a major role, including for the authors at issue in this study.

Along with and as part of a different reading of Hegel's role in modern intellectual history and in contemporary culture, such a perspective suggests the possibility of a different and potentially more profound understanding of relationships—a richer and even more complex interfusion—between modern science and critical theory. Bohr's position in this configuration is in many ways unique and is more important and more revolutionary than Einstein's—a name more often invoked in this context. Along with other complementarities at issue and at work in the present study, such as of history and the unconscious, or of history and theory, another complementarity thus becomes engaged, namely, of modern science and modern critical theory.

# CONNECTIVITIES

Fortunately Ralph Wayvone's library  
happened to include a copy of the  
indispensable *Italian Wedding Fake*  
*Book*, by Deleuze and Guattari.

—Thomas Pynchon, *Vineland*

## CHAPTER



Since the history of complementarity itself exemplifies or thematizes a complementary process, the present chapter offers both an example of a historico-theoretical analysis by means of complementarity and a preliminary illustration of history as a process demanding complementary analysis and description, to be developed more fully later in this study, most specifically in Chapter 7.

The first section addresses the general question of historical origins and connections, or connectivities, and then suggests some specific genealogies of complementary modes of thinking and analysis inside and outside science. I also comment on some of Riemann's mathematical ideas and their role in Bohr's work, especially in the potential genesis of complementarity, and elsewhere, particularly in Deleuze and Guattari, whose Riemannian model is juxtaposed to complementarity and general economy. The theory that they use—Riemann's theory of manifolds, which also figures in Einstein's general relativity—is, however, different from the one, also by Riemann, that inspired young Bohr. Historically, the analysis in this section is closer to Bohr and to the post-Nietzschean history of ideas.

The second section comments, first, on Hegel's significance in this history, and then on the relationships between complementarity and self-consciousness in Bohr. Some Bohr is discovered in Hegel and, conversely, some Hegel in Bohr.

The third section considers the structure of theoretical transformations, revolutions and evolutions, and, by implication, history. It argues, on the one hand, the importance of the complementarity of continuities and breaks and, on the other, the necessity of relating this complementarity to a matrix demanding a much broader complementary field. I conclude with a brief discussion of modern theory's relationships to Hegel and, specifically, of Derrida's claims in that regard. This discussion also offers a transition to the analysis of Hegel presented in subsequent chapters.

### Genealogies

As will be seen in Chapter 7, a theory of history as a general economy suggests that history may be, and perhaps at this point of history must be, inscribed via Freud's matrix of memory-trace and deferral, extended by way of Derrida's matrix into a general economy. Derrida's matrix, however, or Freud's prior to it, engages a much broader theoretical and metaphorical field, with several dimensions parallel to and possibly originating in quantum mechanics. Conversely, quantum theories, particularly Bohr's complementarity, draw on sources in psychology—if not directly on Freud himself, then on sources held in common with Freud and related and parallel developments such as Nietzsche, William James, and Harald Høffding. Here the early, more "physiological" Freud, on whom much of Derrida's matrix also depends, is particularly relevant.

Bohr's initial interests, before physics, were in psychological epistemology. These early efforts already contain ideas at the very least suggestive of those that would later constitute the architectonics of complementarity. Bohr's father, a physiologist, had a powerful influence on him, as did several members of his father's intellectual circle in Copenhagen, in particular Harald Høffding, the leading Danish philosopher at the time. Bohr's early epistemological ideas were also indebted to his lifelong interaction with his mathematician brother Harald, whose doctoral dissertation was on Riemann. This interaction continued throughout Bohr's life and affected his work on complementarity, both as a physical theory and



as a general framework applicable also in other fields such as epistemology, psychology, and biology. Several of Riemann's many achievements are among the most extraordinary mathematical discoveries ever, making Riemann one of the most significant figures in the history of modern, and postmodern, mathematics and science and in a number of interesting developments in other fields. For one thing, his ideas shaped both Bohr's and, even more directly and powerfully, Einstein's thinking. Pais reports that "the last picture Bohr drew on a blackboard before his death showed a curve on a Riemann surface" (*Niels Bohr's Times*, 424).

Bohr's early epistemological ideas were derived in part from Riemann's ideas concerning the mathematics of the functions of complex variables. The parallels and the interaction between quantum processes and mental processes have been continuing topics of discussion in the history of quantum mechanics. Even before Bohr and others developed quantum mechanics, this issue, first raised in 1925, was a focal point of intense discussion. In a letter to his brother Harald, Bohr described his emotional state during his early work in electron theory in 1910 in terms of the complementarity that he would later use to describe the behavior of electrons themselves: "[E]motions like cognitions must be arranged in planes that cannot be compared" (*Collected Works* 1:513). This Riemannian analogy of complementary planes suggests a kind of complementary asynthesis or antisynthesis, particularly if one follows it more closely. Thus Folse suggests that "in a very significant sense, the framework of complementarity can be regarded as a more mature and sophisticated answer [than the Riemannian analogy] to the same problem" (*The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*, 54). More precisely, one could speak of there being an analogous set of problems in the epistemology of quantum physics, since Bohr never developed a general complementarity of interpretive processes. But the connection he makes to Riemann's idea is relevant and important, indicating that, to a degree, the latter contains some key elements of complementarity.<sup>1</sup>

This genealogy illustrates, on the one hand, the extraordinary conceptual and metaphoric richness of modern mathematics and science and, on the other, their significant, if often indirect, influence in modern intellectual history. Some major figures, such as Bohr, Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and, of course, Einstein, are relatively well known outside science. Henri Poincaré, who made major contributions both in mathematics and

physics, including the special theory of relativity, and in philosophy of science, especially the theory of the creative process, also enjoyed considerable recognition. A number of other scientists and mathematicians could be mentioned. Riemann, however, emerges as an extraordinary figure standing behind both Bohr's complementarity and Einstein's general relativity, which uses the mathematics of Riemann manifolds. The latter, it should be kept in mind, is a mathematical theory different from the one—the mathematics of the functions of complex variables—that inspired young Bohr.<sup>2</sup>

Riemann (1826–1866) started as a student of theology and philology at Göttingen and became a professor of mathematics there in 1859. The university was the site of major mathematical work on general relativity, carried out primarily by David Hilbert and his co-workers, as well as of the original development of quantum mechanics by Heisenberg, Born, and Pascual Jordan. Riemann's contribution to the understanding of the global organization of mathematical manifolds, as they are called, had even greater impact, although in great measure through Einstein's general relativity. 'Manifold' is itself a very useful term, as is another mathematical term, 'connectivity,' which may be used metaphorically in the present context. Connectivity, or interconnectivity, would connote both a general possibility of connecting the elements of a manifold and a specific structure of such (inter)connections, a rule relating different elements or areas of a manifold, or a conglomeration of manifolds—a manifold of manifolds. Complementarity, as understood by the present study, is, let me stress, not only a theory of dislocation, or deconstruction, however crucial this aspect of it may be. It is also, and indeed primarily, a theory of interconnections—interconnectivities—between concepts, networks, and fields, thereby also producing new concepts, networks, and fields.

Deleuze and Guattari grasped the importance of Riemann's ideas, especially his theory of manifolds, for the notion and the economy of multiplicity, even though their own vision of history is problematic in my view, partly owing to its dependence on the mathematical model of Riemann manifolds as a model based on the continuum. They see in Riemann's discoveries, notably in the introduction of manifolds [*multiplicités*], a decisive antidialectical event: "It was a decisive event when the mathematician Riemann uprooted the multiple from its predicate state and

made it a noun, ‘multiplicity [*multiplicité*, manifold]’. It marked the end of dialectics and the beginning of a typology and topology of multiplicities. Each multiplicity was defined by  $n$  determinations; sometimes the determinations were independent of the situation, and sometimes they depended upon it” (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 482–83; *Mille Plateaux*, 602–3).<sup>3</sup>

A Riemann differential manifold may be described as a conglomerate—a kind of patchwork—of local, and locally Euclidean, maps that do not cohere, except of course in the limit case of Euclidean homogeneous space itself. For such an object, this mode of representation is capable of mathematical rigor; but, to be more precise, what is crucial for Deleuze and Guattari is this patchwork economy. Albert Lautman’s rather Einsteinian, general relativistic description is the one cited (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 495) and followed by Deleuze and Guattari:

Riemann spaces are devoid of any kind of homogeneity. Each is characterized by the form of the expression that defines the square of the distance between two infinitely proximate points. . . . It follows that two neighboring observers in a Riemann space can locate the points of their immediate vicinity but cannot locate their spaces in relation to each other without a new convention. Each vicinity is therefore like a shred of Euclidean space, *but the linkage between one vicinity and the next is not defined and can be effected in an infinite number of ways. Riemann space at its most general thus presents itself as an amorphous collection of pieces that are juxtaposed but not attached to each other.* (*Les Schémas de structure*, 23, 34–35)<sup>4</sup>

These pieces, however, *can always be connected*, indeed in an infinite number of ways, and connected smoothly, without discontinuity and rupture. By definition, there is always a curve connecting any two given points on a Riemann manifold. This possibility of connection is an important point for Deleuze and Guattari’s general model, based in their rhizome metaphor, already suggesting an overall horizontal connectivity and interconnectivity of a multiplicity or a manifold. Nor, although their structure is fluid or “amorphous,” can one in fact maintain, as Lautman does, that “Riemann spaces are devoid of any kind of homogeneity.” “The form of expression” at issue provides “a kind of homogeneity,”

albeit a homogeneity different from the classical or Euclidean one, and certainly a continuity—and smoothness, amorphousness—which are decisive for Deleuze and Guattari, or Einstein.

As is clear from Lautman's description, Riemann spaces are structured in such a way that, locally, their curved coordinates, maps, and so forth allow for measuring procedures that approximate, and infinitesimally are, Euclidean, which is crucial for Einstein's theory. Locally, space is Euclidean, globally curved; and the presence of a large mass curves it more. Gravitation becomes Riemannian geometry, approaching the Einsteinian dream of making physics into geometry. Many specifically Riemannian features are also utilized by Deleuze and Guattari throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*, specifically the crucial relation between "the smooth and the striated," that is, the metric. In the end, however, Deleuze and Guattari move toward and ground their overall economy in an underlying smooth nonmetric space—a differential manifold of connections, "an amorphous collection of pieces"—correctly seeing it as a more general structure: "It is possible to define this multiplicity [manifold] independently of any reference to a metric [et il est possible de définir cette multiplicité indépendamment de tout référence à une métrique]" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 485; *Mille Plateaux*, 606; translation modified). This primary, smooth multiplicity is decisive in defining their theoretical and political economy.

As a general point, the historical significance assigned by Deleuze and Guattari to Riemann manifolds is well taken; and the implications of the concept of connectivity or again interconnectivity are suggestive and are consistent with the complementary economy at issue in the present study. The speculation regarding antidialectical possibilities is not altogether precise, even though it, too, is useful insofar as the general potential of the multiple and heterogeneous is concerned. First of all, a theory—mathematical, physical, or philosophical—may be based on multiplicity and indeed specifically on Riemannian ideas, as was Einstein's vision, and still remain within Hegelian—dialectical—limits. Secondly, and more importantly, in contrast to complementarity and its models, metaphorical models based on Riemann differential manifolds, such as that found in Deleuze and Guattari, are never sufficient to effect a radical departure from Hegel. In fact such models at times prevent, or at least inhibit, a more radically heterogeneous multiplicity, which the present study aims

to approach by means of general economy and following Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida. Bataille is actually invoked at the outset of *Anti-Oedipus* (4), which may even be seen as a rewriting of *The Accursed Share*. Deleuze and Guattari, however, do not explore the implications of Bataille's ideas at issue in the present study; and the same may be said about Nietzsche—a figure of major significance for them.<sup>5</sup>

It may even be suggested that some of the problems of the Deleuzian vision may stem from their failure to treat Hegel's dialectic with sufficient rigor, despite some valid criticism of Hegel in *A Thousand Plateaus*, in *Anti-Oedipus*, and in many other works by Deleuze. Hegel's dialectic, I shall argue here, is a dialectic of the multiple and of the manifold; and it has a possible historical connection to the emergence of new, non-Euclidean, geometries, including Riemann's. Hegel's multiplicities, moreover, are Heraclitean, transforming, and specifically historical, even though they are in turn not radical enough. Complementarity as general economy is always antidialectical, even though—and because—it engages dialectic, complementarily and within refigured limits. Deleuzian multiplicity—the opposite of Hegel's and partly a reversal of it—may also be seen as lacking in complementarity. Part of the reason for this lack is the model's excessive spatial determination. Hegel would have deemed it a kind of geometrism or topologism. He would also have been likely, and for good reason, to perceive in it features of Spinozism. Conversely, Hegel may offer a great deal more to the economy of the multiple, heterogeneous, and transformational than Deleuze and Guattari seem to suggest.

To a degree, the Hegelian topology of consciousness, particularly Absolute Knowledge, anticipates several features of Riemannian or, more generally, non-Euclidean space. It is a kind of continuous and, while globally governed, heterogeneous—manifold—process. As Gaston Bachelard points out, the emergence of non-Euclidean geometries, of which Riemann's is one, coincides, and is perhaps more than coincidental, with the emergence of dialectic.<sup>6</sup> Bachelard sees these non-Euclidean tendencies as dialectical, specifically against Kant, “who based his architectonics of reason . . . on the immutable architecture of geometry” as Euclidean geometry. Bachelard, however, rightly cautions against “a ‘Hegelian’ philosophy of mathematics” (*The New Scientific Spirit*, 21). More generally, one should not overstate the case and overlook the limitations of Hegel's

schemata. Nor, conversely, should one overlook the potential of the Deleuzian model—a *continuous* heterogeneous multiplicity—its limitations and problems notwithstanding. The economy developed by Deleuze and Guattari offers a suggestive metaphor of history; and as indicated, many features and implications of this metaphor are consistent with the general economic understanding of history.

To a degree one may speak in this context of juxtaposing the economy of the spatial—such as, in particular, in Bergson and Spinoza—to the philosophy of the temporal—such as in Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, and in some measure Freud—proceeding once again via the reading of Nietzsche, which Deleuze, too, shifts toward the spatial. This emphasis is consistent with an emphasis on and a celebration of schizophrenia as a model—in effect, perhaps fundamentally, an atemporal or detemporalizing model in Deleuze and Guattari. I shall suggest a more complementary metaphorical economy of schizophrenia in Chapter 6.<sup>7</sup>

It is not that transformation and becoming are unimportant in Deleuze, any more than spatiality is absent or unimportant in Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, or Freud. All of these cases deal with complex spatial interactions, but, by the same token, with different specific distributions, balances or imbalances, priorities, and economies of determination—differences that play an equally decisive role. Deleuze's philosophy is, by definition, the philosophy of "becoming" and likewise of heterogeneity, or multiplicity. At this juncture, too, it is suggested, among other things, by the reference to René Thom's work on catastrophe theory, specifically in *Modèles mathématiques de la morphogenèse*, which Thom himself characterizes as a very Heraclitean idea. Moreover, while Deleuzian becoming operates heterogeneously, it does so *smoothly, continuously* (475), manifesting essential characteristics of differential topology, or the topology of differential manifolds. The Deleuzian "space" so constructed makes the movement and transformation uninhibited, smooth—certainly at a utopian limit; but a utopian limit is always made possible by the underlying configuration which is already there—present—as Hegel in fact understood. This economy is fully consistent with the Deleuzian economy of schizophrenia as a free, uninhibited movement in any given direction, freely and without inhibition changing one's frames of reference and coordinates, and so forth, announced by *Anti-Oedipus* and further celebrated by *A Thousand Plateaus*. Mathematically or

mathematically-metaphorically speaking, the model is indeed a smooth differential Riemann manifold, Einstein's favorite mathematical object and subject. A repeated reference to Thom's "retroactive *smoothing*" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 481; *Modèles*, 218–19; emphasis added), is in fact also to "a *continuous* variation in which the variable reacts upon its antecedents" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 572–73 n. 13; emphasis added), as opposed to a complementary process.<sup>8</sup>

The reference to Mandelbrot's fractals as "the path" to "a very general mathematical definition of *smooth spaces*" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 486; *Mille Plateaux*, 607; emphasis added), serves the same goal, although again the mathematics of fractals is itself a more complex, and indeed more complementary, configuration in this sense. Fractals and the related mathematics of chaos theory deal rather with spaces that are never quite smooth, although Deleuzian smoothness is also conducive to a certain "schizophrenic" chaos. Along these lines, the Deleuzian economy is in fact closer to general economy as introducing chaos into order, while chaos theory can be seen more along the lines of bringing order to chaos—a crucial difference, particularly as respective potential metaphoric models are concerned.<sup>9</sup> Similarly to Einstein's hope or dream in physics, however much they may be separated in time, at times by millennia, all structures and topologies—"plateaus"—traversed by Deleuze and Guattari's book are finally subsumed and governed by the Riemannian economy of continuous, smooth manifolds; or to be more precise, by a model or a set of models that can be so rendered in mathematical or metaphorical terms.

It should be qualified, lest there be misunderstanding, that, as is the case with becoming and temporal, as against spatial, multiplicities and other paired types of multiplicities, discontinuity is not ignored or absolutely suspended by Deleuze and Guattari (483–84). At issue is *how* different aspects of the transformational and the multiple are related, organized, and put into play. Deleuze and Guattari do not deny more discontinuous, striated, or complementary effects (500). Neither does Hegel. Throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*, *Anti-Oedipus*, and other works one finds invocations of many discontinuous—although rarely complementary—configurations, specifically in relation to history.<sup>10</sup> Throughout Deleuze and Guattari's analyses, "discreteness" always appears to function within the model just considered;<sup>11</sup> and as such

it is quite different from the randomness and discontinuity of quantum mechanics, and Bohr's complementarity. This functioning is, thus, consonant with the overall point made by the present discussion, although, as indicated, one cannot say that Deleuze and Guattari absolutely suspend randomness or chance either. On the contrary they insist upon a certain supra-statistical chance, which, however, is still placed within their Riemannian model, making their overall economy of chance problematic, and deconstructable. For, a randomness that would enable a radical departure from classical theories—whether they are based on continuity or randomness—requires a complementary and general economic model, of which Deleuze and Guattari always fall short. Geometrically speaking, this model, while allowing more Riemannian or rhizomatic spaces within it, would imply that there may always be points that cannot be connected, topologies that cannot be made smooth, and other irreducible singularities within a given manifold. By definition, however, one cannot contain a general economy by a geometrical or any given model, or containable class of models. It is true that Deleuze and Guattari, too, employ a variety—a manifold—of models. Some key types of models are missing, however.

A similar argument can be made concerning unity and totality. As is suggested by the passages already referred to, which speak of different types of multiplicities without "a lost Unity or Totality or . . . of a Unity and Totality yet to come" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 32; *Mille Plateaux*, 45), throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*, *Anti-Oedipus*, and Deleuze's other work, totality and unity are major targets, and "the age of partial objects" is proclaimed and celebrated (*Anti-Oedipus*, 42, *L'Anti-Oedipe*, 50). And yet in the end, a certain globalization reemerges that is ultimately Hegelian, even if, and possibly in part because, it reverses Hegel. There is, to return to a Riemannian metaphor, no global striation or coordinate system, Euclidean or other; and yet there still remains an unstructured and unstriated global, indeed ever-extending, heterogeneous topology that underlies and governs everything. It is a space that can be traversed or, in Deleuze and Guattari's idiom, schizophrenically differentiated, multiplied and extended into "a thousand plateaus." This space, thus, is finally connectable, or at least not sufficiently disconnected, or complementarily, connected and disconnected. In actuality, certain quasi-Hegelian or quasi-Marxist historical, or again quasi-historical, global



stages transpire in *Anti-Oedipus*. In some measure, *A Thousand Plateaus* heterogeneously restructures this global economy—rhizomizes it, as it were—according to the geometrical play of coordinations and forces under discussion. In fact, many, often problematic, antihistorical or anti-genealogical (21) motifs permeate the book.

I am not suggesting here that sustained temporal or spatial global trajectories or stages, potentially on a very large scale—geohistories and geopolitics—need not be considered; quite the contrary, but their economy must still be general. The problem rather is that the Deleuzian economy is actually not complementary enough, either globally or locally, even within the Riemannian model at issue. Globally, it is over-reaching, in a utopian fashion, bypassing important intermediate configurations; locally, it is too differentiated and too permissive of transformations and transgressions, too short-term, too anti-genealogical (21), while still retaining the underlying smoothness and continuum.

The problem, thus, is the underlying continuous efficacy determining the problematic, specifically utopian, dimensions of a given economy, however plural or however transformational, conscious as in Hegel, or unconscious as in Deleuze and Guattari. The rhizome economy is fundamentally different from the Hegelian economy in that, beyond the role of the unconscious, there is neither an overall hierarchy nor a single controlling map of the manifold, whose local maps fluidly transform and flow amorphously into one another. It does however share much topology with Hegel, and particularly at the utopian limit—continuous, smooth, uninhibited transitions, and even some global features as just indicated, such as the possibility of an infinite extension or reach and, all the anti-universalist claims notwithstanding, a universal connectivity. An efficacy of that type would be impossible even in view of some of Deleuze and Guattari's own propositions.

The continuity at issue has, as shall be seen in Chapter 5, its roots in Newton, as much as in Hegel, Riemann and Einstein, and plays a profound role in the topology of the Hegelian vision of history and consciousness. It is a part of Hegel's immense shadow, or many shadows and *chiaroscuros*, which precede and follow him, are cast in many directions and not controlled by the movement of a single sun, and which are never only Hegel's own, but are instead, complementarily, his and not his. They may be Newton's, for example, or Descartes's or Kant's before Hegel, or

Einstein's, Husserl's, or Heidegger's after him. Rhizome economy, as the very metaphor of rhizome suggests, is the economy of underlying global *connectivity*, and thus still a restricted economy. One needs in fact, both locally *and* globally, a much more complex complementarity of continuity and other features of interpretive, historical, theoretical, or political processes.

It is, then, no coincidence that Deleuze and Guattari invoke Riemann in relation to their own matrix, which in many ways governs the book's vision. In this respect, their matrix acquires a number of similarities with Einstein's philosophical vision as based on Riemann's geometry, in part, possibly, because Spinoza holds such major significance for both Einstein and Deleuze.<sup>12</sup> Deleuze and Guattari refer to Einstein in conjunction with Riemann and Henri Bergson.<sup>13</sup> Einstein's computer-generated portrait surfaces metonymically as the entrance to their "Conclusion" (501). Their reference to "the Einstein abstract machine" (511) is an apt and pointed characterization, although the notion of its functioning as a "machine" requires critical scrutiny and ultimately works against their vision.<sup>14</sup>

This finally restricted economy will be opposed to and deconstructed through the general economy and complementarity of "becoming," or "presence" and coordination, spatial or temporal, continuous or discontinuous. Such a general economy, we recall, must relate to an efficacy that itself may not even be seen as "becoming" or "difference" or "transformability," "spatiality" or "temporality," or anything, including "nothing," while producing corresponding effects. By the same token, of course, this efficacy cannot be unequivocally, by way of absolute difference, separated from these effects, but neither, conversely, can it be unified with them. A very different logic is at stake, such as is developed in Derrida's general economy of *différance* and its satellite structures, although Nietzsche, Bohr, and Bataille often speak in analogous terms, as, to a degree and within finally restricted economies, do Freud, Lacan, Heidegger, and Althusser.<sup>15</sup> In terms of scientific prototypes or, better, interactive complementary co-economies, one can see this economy as a Riemannian-Einsteinian economy and juxtapose it to Bohr's complementarity, also coupled at certain points with Gödel's undecidability.

It is, thus, hardly accidental either that, metaphorically or otherwise, neither indeterminacy nor undecidability plays a significant role in their

analysis or, it appears, in Deleuze's work in general. Deleuze and Guattari actually appear to be critical of undecidability or rather of the metaphorical applications of undecidability, which they associate, incorrectly, I think, or at least reductively, with Oedipalization.<sup>16</sup> While Deleuze, throughout his own work and his collaboration with Guattari, continually uses scientific and mathematical, particularly geometrical, metaphorical models, these models tend to be related primarily to classical physics. Commenting on the history of the metaphysics of force, in both modern post-Newtonian physics and in general, Lyotard writes: "This metaphysics needs a general mechanics. Deleuze has, in a sense, done nothing other than investigate and unfold its possibilities."<sup>17</sup> The assessment is correct, but the Deleuzian "mechanics" is nevertheless not a "quantum mechanics"—a complementarity of relations and forces—but perhaps only a general relativity—a geometry of the multiple, which is made particularly apparent by the discussion of "the physical model" in *A Thousand Plateaus* (488–92).

With caution, one can suggest as a general point that all theories—economies—based on or conceptually and metaphorically codetermined through classical physical theories, as opposed to quantum physics, are likely to be and historically have been restricted economies. Beyond many obvious but more traditional cases, more recent examples would include Deleuze and Guattari's and Michel Serres's economies, both of which actively engage multiple scientific models, or earlier Adorno's metaphorical economy of force-field [Kraftfeld], all multiply transformational but still restricted. Deleuze's analysis in effect suggests how, in Foucault, classical science, particularly physics, functions indirectly as a restricted economy or co-economy. Foucault's is a powerful, but still classical geometry of force and of the play of forces and differences between forces. I am not thereby suggesting that such models, or restricted economies in general, cannot be effective either within their own or within general economic limits, where they inescapably continue to operate. Conversely, one must acknowledge that from time to time the theories at issue, as well as other restricted economic theories—for example, in Husserl, Heidegger, or Hegel—call into question, often productively, various restricted economic determinations, especially in science or mathematics. In many of his works, beginning with *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze offers a critique of various forms of statistical determinism, the statistical dream:

the belief, originating perhaps with Laplace (1749–1827), also a contemporary of Hegel, in the possibility of explaining the world by means of mathematical statistics. That questioning may be extended to some potential uses of quantum physics as a metaphoric model. As the present analysis suggests, however, a very different extension and metaphoric traffic are at issue in complementarity, insofar as complementarity is used as a general economy relating to a loss in representation, rather than to statistical determination. In fact, quantum statistics also is far more undetermined than the statistics employed in classical models, once the relevant physics is fully considered either in relation to classical—large—statistical ensembles or to classically nonstatistical objects, such as single particles.

It is not so much mathematical or physical models or co-models themselves that are at issue here, but a resulting theoretical matrix or economy, although in Bohr we find a conjunction of both, rather than only a mathematical-physical model insisted upon on metaphysical grounds, as is found in Einstein.

In general, as I have stressed from the outset, we must guard against transforming the history of relationships between scientific and other disciplines at issue here into a Hegelian one. Rather, we should see this history as multiply complementary—heterogeneously interactive and interpretively heterogeneous; and one should keep in mind the differences between the fields of their operation. In particular, in nonmathematical domains one is allowed to use such metaphors much more freely and loosely than in the exact, mathematical sciences. Such usage, however, is never free from constraint or the requirement of rigor, which is never, even in the exact sciences, solely a question of exactitude. In fact, Deleuze and Guattari correctly point out “the problem of writing: one absolutely must have inexact expressions, in order to designate something exactly [problème de l’écriture: il faut absolument des expressions anexactes pour désigner quelque chose exactement]” (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 20; *Mille Plateaux*, 31; translation modified). The difference between such requirements in different fields becomes itself an important question of theory. As the preceding discussion makes evident, however, many of Riemann’s ideas had a profound and diverse significance for modern science and, although less directly, for modern intellectual history.

Riemann’s role is, as I said, not unique. David Hilbert, one of the

greatest mathematicians of this century, made brilliant contributions both to the mathematics of quantum mechanics and to the general theory of relativity.<sup>18</sup> He was responsible, moreover, in a unique way for the development in the foundations of mathematics that finally culminated, albeit against his own philosophy of mathematics, in Gödel's results.<sup>19</sup> John von Neumann made several extraordinary contributions in such diverse areas as quantum mechanics, game theory, and computer mathematics, all of which play major roles in defining the modern condition and—according to Lyotard, who specifically refers to all of these developments—even more so the postmodern condition. Riemann's work, however, dates, remarkably, back to about 1850. Revolutions often have a longer history than is initially apparent, and greater continuity. Their topologies and connectivities—continuities and discontinuities—are complex. They are more complex than any mathematical object conceived so far, even though, beyond quantum physics and Gödel's undecidables, we now have catastrophes, chaos, fractals, and other esoteric objects, all which have been circulated in, and in relation to, postmodern or poststructuralist theories.

Here, too, in a self-referential fashion, the landscape of the history of a certain topology itself exhibits many features of this topology. It is, however, part of the overarching economy of the history of complementarity as itself multiply complementary. Some ramifications of these propositions were indicated earlier, for example, that continuities and breaks are jointly necessary or, perhaps more importantly, that history always exceeds *history* as a result. Any given complementarity or any given feature of Bohr's complementarity as a matrix suggests metaphoric analogies for history. But the matrix, as a general economy, equally requires that no specific complementarity and no single history—nor any general framework marked by these terms—be sufficient to map (non)histories and (non)complementarities that may arise in the process. Self-referentiality or more generally reflexivity itself must be suspended at a certain point. Against Hegel, a radical deconstruction of reflexivity is at stake in the question of general economy. I shall discuss this issue more extensively in Chapter 6.

Along with Gödel's results, quantum theory—the physics of the discontinuous, or rather of the complementary—played in this century a role analogous to the role that the mathematics and physics of Newton

and Leibniz—the physics and mathematics of the continuum—played in Hegel and the history of Hegelianism and related developments. Quantum theory, especially the introduction of complementarity, produced a major scientific and intellectual revolution, a break that was in itself an event of great transformative power. It has had a tremendous impact on modern intellectual history, in many ways defining, but also defined by, twentieth-century thinking—historical, theoretical, or political. Similarly to Gödel's results in mathematical logic, it powerfully connotes the possibility of new forms of thinking. It undermines and even destroys all forms of synthesis hitherto—let us say, Hegelian forms of synthesis, for Hegel is both a culmination and, in many ways also, a beginning—a major new opening of this history.

It is worth stressing in this context that, while all manner of metaphoric traffic and transfer is engaged and new possibilities and connections continuously emerge, general economy and complementarity also impose constraints, at times quite severe, upon theoretical and interpretive economies outside the field of physics, especially insofar as the economy of matter is concerned. Bohr's complementarity already does more than offer a field of metaphors that can be transferred elsewhere. For, complementarity as an interpretive matrix is already, or is very close to, a general economy; and Bohr did derive very general consequences from the quantum postulate and complementary behavior of quantum objects. He also indicated the possible application of these consequences elsewhere, particularly in the problem of self-consciousness, which in the end is inescapably Hegelian. Constrained by physics, and demanding that these constraints be rigorously taken into account by any philosophy, or anti-philosophy, of nature, Bohr arrived at a theoretical economy fundamentally undermining all previous philosophies of nature.

In this undermining and in general, complementarity has a great affinity with such events in other fields as Nietzsche's revolutionary thinking and, in the wake of Nietzsche, with the history of anti-Hegelian thinking, from Freud to deconstruction and related developments. Some of these developments were influenced more directly by the ideas of modern physics and mathematics, or logic, specifically Gödel's theorem. Other recent theories, such as catastrophe theory and chaos theory, have had a powerful impact as well, along with developments in modern biology, information theory, computer science, and related fields. It is worth reit-

erating that Kuhn's work on his theory of scientific revolutions was greatly influenced, conceptually and metaphorically, by quantum theory and specifically by Bohr's ideas. The same may be said about Feyerabend, for whom Bohr is a central figure and influence. These developments are also continuous, or complementarily continuous and discontinuous, with Darwin, Marx, and Freud, and in some measure with Heidegger, although his position in this history is more complex and ambiguous. But they also break with these thinkers, as Bohr breaks with Einstein as the thinker and the figure of continuity, both in science and philosophy, with classical theories—theories based on the idea of the continuum.

In conjunction with Hegel and in general, the significance of modern science on the French landscape at issue in the present study is equally momentous. To begin with, several major authors, such as Bachelard and Michel Serres, address the philosophy and history of science. Scientific theories, ideas, and metaphors also figure prominently, and often in conjunction with Nietzsche or Freud, and thus along the axis of the unconscious, in Bataille, Lacan, Deleuze, Lyotard, Derrida. In Serres, Deleuze, and Foucault, one finds classical mathematics and science to be of greater significance than quantum mechanics, although thermodynamics and statistical physics serve as a kind of connecting bridge, often via Nietzsche, who was influenced by those fields. As was just considered, Deleuze's work, from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* on, is permeated by the scientific thematics at issue here, which also affect much of Foucault's work and, as I have indicated, often in a similar and proximate fashion. One can also trace connections in modern feminist theory, specifically in Luce Irigaray.<sup>20</sup>

These connections have certainly affected Bataille's thinking, and specifically his encounter with Hegel. Throughout his writing, Bataille refers to modern physics and cosmology, as well as to the history of mathematics. Along with its other sources, particularly Nietzsche, the notion of general economy can, as we have seen, be directly linked to the loss in the content of observation of quantum physics. The latter, of course, has important relations to Nietzsche's ideas themselves, by way of related developments in science that preceded it, especially thermodynamics, which was a major influence on Nietzsche's thinking, including the concept of eternal recurrence.

Such is also undoubtedly the case in Freud and Lacan. Lacan's interest,

particularly in his later works, in a wide range of models and metaphors in mathematics and science, at times quite esoteric, is well known. His influence on the landscape of modern, or postmodern, theory has been enormous, although the relationships between Lacan and several other figures, such as Deleuze and Derrida, have been extremely complex, with all these authors influencing each other. Lacan's significance in the present context extends beyond the more immediate impact of quantum mechanical conceptions in his works. While the relationships between such Lacanian notions as the 'Real,' the 'Imaginary,' and the 'Symbolic' are deconstructable, at least in some of his texts,<sup>21</sup> one can say that, in several texts, Lacan approaches something like complementarity between or among these notions. To a degree, the same may be said of interactions and inhibitions between consciousness and the unconscious—the id, the ego, the superego, and so forth—in Freud, whose own work, however, may have been affected by the new physics, and specifically complementarity, more directly, in part via Carl Gustav Jung. Jung directly borrows quantum mechanical complementarity in this context, on which I shall comment below. One can also suggest that, with the possible exception of Nietzsche, Lacan was also the first to approach a complementary economy of language and the unconscious, or, to use proper names, of Saussure and Freud.<sup>22</sup> Lacan's fusion or complementarization of Freud and Saussure may well have been his most extraordinary achievement and his greatest contribution to modern intellectual history.

Modern science clearly affected Derrida's thinking and his conceptions, such as *différance* or *dissemination* and the resulting undecidables and aporias. For the latter notions, Gödel's theorem is, as we have seen, the main direct "analogy," as Derrida refers to it in introducing undecidability in *Dissemination* (219). Along with indeterminacy and the complementarity of quantum mechanics, Gödel's conceptions and theories were a pivotal moment of modern intellectual history, including the history of anti-Hegelian thinking.<sup>23</sup> Gödel's discoveries have, of course, their historical continuities, such as with Aristotle's *aporia*, which are also one of the main (re)sources of deconstruction, or with Leibniz's idea, via Chinese writing, of mapping ideas as the propositions of logic or philosophy.<sup>24</sup> An immensely rich history emerges here, abounding in proximities and distances, continuities and breaks, and complementarities, both in relation to modern intellectual history and to the Western



history of ideas from the pre-Socratics on. Against Hegel, these two histories cannot be unified. They are instead complementary in a relation that is *finally* undecidable as to the truth of history and the many uncertainty relations involved. Many complementary descriptions, however, can be productively engaged.

Gödelian thematics has been directly addressed by Derrida since his earliest work on Husserl; and it may be seen as a major paradigmatic influence on Derrida's deconstruction. One must, of course, in general discriminate between the nuances of undecidability, uncertainty, and complementarity and their effects on the shape of various metaphorical models and paradigms and the theoretical and historical projects thereby engaged. The undecidability of mathematical logic does not lead strictly to complementarity as uncertainty does in quantum mechanics; but it does suggest, metaphorically, the possibility—and perhaps the necessity—of a kind of undecidable complementarity. The latter may be found in Derrida, where it indicates a relation to, and a dependence—theoretical, metaphorical, and historical—on both models, that of Gödelian logic and that of quantum mechanics. As discussed in the preceding chapter, however, there emerges a difference in emphasis between the ensuing theoretical, historical, or critical projects—those that proceed via uncertainty and complementarity, by *analogy* with quantum mechanics, and those that proceed via undecidability, by *analogy* with mathematical logic. Analogy possesses a considerable, although not absolute, force of determination. While such metaphoric analogies and transfers are not rigorously scientific or mathematical conceptions, the connections themselves and the differences they imply can be rigorously established and are of great significance.

Bohr, then, justly saw a great epistemological lesson in quantum mechanics. It constitutes a radical break with the past. It destroys the very notion of *epistēmē*, or at least powerfully manifests the role of this destruction in modern intellectual history, beginning with Nietzsche, who taught us this lesson as well, in part by way of sources in the history of science which he has in common with quantum mechanics.

While I do want to stress the significance of the contribution of the authors of these scientific ideas and the power of the ideas themselves, I do not want to assign to them any unconditional priority. On the contrary, besides the fact that a general economy precludes assigning uncon-

ditional priority to anything, one of my main points is that Nietzsche's epistemology or anti-epistemology has all the necessary ingredients of what Bohr sees as the "epistemological lesson" of quantum mechanics. Nietzsche's ideas may even be one of the sources of Bohr's—via many mediations, to be sure, but these mediations or, let us say, this *différance* need not reduce, and it may in fact enhance, the power of their impact. Moreover, as shall be seen presently, Nietzsche's impact on Bohr's thinking may be more immediate than it may appear.

As I have pointed out, there are many overt and hidden nonscientific sources of the scientific and mathematical ideas at issue here, for example, in Freud or, of course, in the history of philosophy. The latter is clearly reflected in Bohr's many formulations, specifically complementary relations, and in the matrix as a whole. In addition to Kant, Kierkegaard, Høffding, and William James, who are often mentioned by commentators, more immediate, or more immediately mediated, influences may have included Husserl and Brentano. While Hegel is conspicuous by his absence in most accounts of the philosophical genesis of quantum mechanics, he may also be seen as one of the sources of complementarity, particularly insofar as the interaction of continuity and discontinuity is concerned. From Newton to Maxwell and Riemann, there are, of course, more direct sources in this respect in mathematics and physics themselves, on some of which Hegel himself was in turn able to draw.

The sources of everything, here or anywhere, are, as I have stressed throughout, multiple, irreducibly multiple, from Indian philosophy to personal relationships. Accompanying and constituting part of originality is the ability to utilize powerful metaphors, conceptions, and frameworks inside and outside a given field. This ability was evident in scientists such as Newton, Descartes, or Leibniz or, conversely, in philosophers such as Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel. Descartes and Leibniz would have to be positioned between science and philosophy. Many literary figures could be cited, too, from Lucretius to Proust and Joyce and beyond. The twofold point at issue here is, first, that this traffic is interactive, and second, that complementarity and general economy have specific interactive or complementary origins and are multiply, complementarily, connected. The general economy of these complementary interactions prohibits one from speaking of a single origin of anything, but allows one the exploration of many complementary interactions shaping the history at issue.

By the time complementarity was conceived, Nietzsche's impact was considerable. Curiously, it was especially so in Denmark, where Nietzsche's philosophy was taught as early as 1887 by Georg Brandes in Copenhagen—Bohr's native city and the birthplace of complementarity, sometimes referred to as "the Copenhagen interpretation." Nietzsche's comment in *Ecce Homo* is of some interest: "Ten years—and nobody in Germany has felt bound in conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence under which it lies buried: it was a foreigner, a Dane, who first possessed sufficient refinement of instinct *and courage* for this, who felt outraged by my alleged friends.—At what German university would it be possible today to have lectures on my philosophy, such as were given last spring in Copenhagen by Dr. Georg Brandes who thus proved himself once again as a psychologist?" (*Ecce Homo*, 324; KSA 6:363) The statement takes on an uncannily prophetic character if applied to another Dane, Bohr, whose thinking was so courageous and revolutionary. The connection may actually be far more grounded than it appears. For Bohr in fact knew Georg Brandes personally and admired him. It is interesting, although not surprising, that this potential connection to Nietzsche has not been explored in the literature on Bohr.

The accompanying context of Nietzsche's statement, which is in fact Hegel, is of great interest as well: "I myself have never suffered from all this; what is *necessary* does not hurt me; *amor fati* is my inmost nature. But this does not preclude my love of irony, even world-historical irony" (*Ecce Homo*, 324; KSA 6:363). World-historical irony is a brilliant *idea* against and a reversal or, better, an overturning, of Hegel's idea of "world-historical" continuity. In whichever sense of this grand Hegelian word, this idea may be seen as an allegory, in either sense: as a rhetoric of temporality or as many an allegory it hides or reveals. Nietzsche's irony is a trope of radical—but, again, not absolute—discontinuity. In effect, this irony prohibits anything *world*-historical, whether as allegory or as irony. It subverts the Hegelian continuum, replacing it by the complementarity of continuity and discontinuity, or of allegory and irony.<sup>25</sup>

The same type of revolutionary thinking was present in Bohr's thinking throughout his life, certainly already in his theory of the atom, which is as remarkable for its highly nontrivial and revolutionary thinking as for its physics. It is also apparent in many of Bohr's often-quoted maxims, such as "It is certainly a mad idea; the question is whether it is mad enough to

be true." The statement is as much anti-Hegelian as it is Nietzschean, although Nietzsche would have demanded ideas mad enough to go beyond the idea of truth itself. Another of Bohr's maxims, "'deep truths' are statements in which the opposite also contains deep truth" (APHK, 66), is a profound expression of complementarity, although the latter may be a conjunction of ideas that are not only or directly opposite. Such a conjunction in Bohr is no dialectical contradiction that can then be sublated by way of *Aufhebung*, although by itself this conjunction may, of course, be read in the Hegelian way and may not have been possible without Hegel. To the extent, however, that it suggests a process or matrix, such as complementarity, within which both such truths might be functioning, it is quite different from the Hegelian process. It is closer to what Lyotard calls the *differend*, played within the same proposition as against the two "phrases in dispute," which *phrase* is the subtitle of *The Differend*.

In his very Nietzschean essay "The Truth of Masks," Oscar Wilde writes: "For in art there is no such thing as a universal truth. A Truth in art is that whose contradictory is also true. And just as it is only in art-criticism, and through it, that we can apprehend the Platonic theory of ideas, so it is only in art-criticism, and through it, that we can realize Hegel's system of contraries. The truth of metaphysics is the truth of masks" (*The Artist as Critic*, 432). Wilde enacts many reversals and contradictions here—such as between art and criticism, art and philosophy, criticism and philosophy. He also wears many masks. It is not inconceivable that Wilde's statement could have been a source for Bohr, and Hegel might well have been a common source for Wilde and Bohr. Wilde's concluding great phrase, however, moves, or enables us to move, with Nietzsche, beyond Hegel and dialectics. The truths of metaphysics, or the truths of elementary particles, are the truths of masks, to the extent that we may speak of truths, or of masks; for, as Nietzsche taught us, along with the true world, we must give up the world of appearances. Such theatrical or carnivalesque metaphors should be extended with great care to elementary particles. Wilde's statement, however, acquires extraordinary effectiveness in the context of the meta-physics and against the metaphysics of modern physics, specifically Bohr's debate with Einstein. Following Nietzsche, we must abandon both truth and masks, the true world and the apparent one. But Nietzsche also understood that we cannot quite do without either and often need, complementarily, both.

In truth, what Bohr should have said, and perhaps meant, or masked, is that a deep truth or idea is one the complementary of which is also a deep truth or idea. Certainly both particles and waves, or continuity and discontinuity, or space-time coordination, or space and time to begin with, or causality, are all great ideas. Or one can consider history, Hegel's great idea, or the unconscious, Nietzsche's and Freud's great idea, or matter, which as an idea has a complex signature, or general economy in Bataille, or *différance* in Derrida. In one way or another, all these ideas imply their contradictory, and complementarily demand each other and force us, against but in the shadow of Hegel, to question the truth of truth, the idea of idea—and the idea of truth and greatness.

### Hegel's Quanta and Bohr's Phenomenology

Remarkably, but also *logically*, some of Hegel's most relevant elaborations on the continuum occur in the chapter of the first *Logic* entitled "Quantum," which considers the interaction of the continuous and discontinuous, most pointedly in its conclusion. The chapter also contains a prolonged discussion of mathematics and differential calculus. One can obviously establish broader connections between and among Hegel's *Logic*, or both of his *Logics*—or Hegel's logic—and various logics, interpretations, and models operative in quantum and atomic physics, specifically complementarity. In the first place, quantum and atomic physics trace their history back to Democritus, Leucippus, and other pre-Socratic philosophers, proceeding then to Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Lucretius, and then, closer to Hegel, to Newton, Leibniz, Spinoza, Laplace, and Kant. In addition, one must keep in mind the emerging atomistic theories and other scientific developments around Hegel's time, such as the question of the *perpetuum mobile*, Brownian motion, or the beginning of thermodynamics. Sadi Carnot, who formulated the second law of thermodynamics, and quite possibly also the first—the law of conservation of energy—was a contemporary of Hegel.

Hegel discusses many of these issues throughout his writing, in the first *Logic*, the *Encyclopedia*, particularly in *The Philosophy of Nature* but also in *Logic*, the second *Logic*, and in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, and indeed already in the *Phenomenology* in the context of the notion of force [*Kraft*], which I shall consider in Chapter 4. That Hegel discusses atomism is particularly interesting, especially since he

does so in both *Logics*, and it is logical, for at issue in those passages is the logic of the continuous and the discontinuous and thus, in a way, quantum logic in the generic sense of the term: how one thinks of the continuous and the discontinuous and relationships between them.<sup>26</sup>

Analogously but of course not identically to Bohr, it is an attempt to think through the duality of the continuous and the discontinuous, both in relation to physical phenomena and conceptually. The former, according to Hegel, is impossible without the latter. As he writes on Newton in *The Lectures of the History of Philosophy*, "His [Newton's] maxim was: 'Physics, beware of metaphysics,' that is to say, beware of thinking. But 'physics' can do nothing without thinking; attraction and the like are metaphysical categories established by Newton on the basis of thinking. The issue is just the way in which the categories are to be applied" (*Lectures on the History of Philosophy: Volume III, Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, 184; *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Teil 4, 127). The point is well taken, even if it finally requires a very different analysis, both more deconstructive in either direction—deconstructing philosophy by means of physics and physics by means of philosophy—and more complementary. Hegel's understanding of the issue, however, had an enormous influence on the subsequent history of philosophy, specifically in Heidegger's thinking and formulations on science and technology, and particularly in relation to Heidegger's notion of thinking [Denken], which one must, of course, also distinguish from Hegel's.

Hegel explores interactively both the history and the logic of atomistic and quantum thinking. Proceeding against Hegel, we remain in his shadow and in the shadows of his shadows, even in atomic and quantum mechanics. I shall not fully consider the field of these connections here, but will only comment on some aspects of the duality of continuity and discontinuity pertinent to the questions at issue in the present study, which will be developed more fully in subsequent chapters on Hegel.<sup>27</sup> One reason is that to do more would require a treatment of the texts, specifically of both *Logics*, which would demand a separate study. I do think, however, that such an analysis would support my main claims and conclusions at the moment and throughout this study. Most major literature on Hegel appears to reinforce this type of argument, although the best commentary, both classical and more recent, would obviously add

important nuances to our understanding of Hegel in this respect as well. Naturally, especially after Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida, or Bohr, one can read Hegel's logic differently—as more deconstructive, for example, or more complementary; but, as I pointed out earlier, an extremely careful discrimination of differences and nuances is mandatory in any such attempt.

Hegel remains the thinker of the continuum, and his logic is always the logic of the continuum, including, crucially, as the logic of overcoming of all discontinuity by means of the *Aufhebung*.<sup>28</sup> While we must proceed against Hegel, we cannot of course simply hold this insistence on and desire for the continuum against him. Beyond the complexity of Hegel's position, in particular the Heraclitean, transformational nature of the Hegelian economy, there are powerful theoretical, psychological, and political reasons for such a position. Einstein's case demonstrates the point; and Einstein, Heidegger, and others maintain such positions, *after* Bohr, *after* Freud, *after* Nietzsche, *after* Darwin, *after* Marx. We do not know what kind of *Logic* Hegel would have written today. It could be similar to Heidegger's, or quite possibly to Derrida's. Derrida has crucial proximities to Hegel or Heidegger, and thus to philosophy, more so than does Nietzsche or Bataille. In a way, Derrida may be seen as the last Hegelian thinker, although one must of course keep in mind equally significant differences between them. Derrida's textual critique and deconstruction of Hegel, Heidegger, and philosophy as the metaphysics of presence or restricted economy remains extraordinarily effective and important. In Derrida's own terms, a relation of simultaneously infinitesimal proximity and radical difference is at stake. But there are also proximities different from Derrida's, or ones we may want to evaluate differently and no longer retain.

Hegel's is never the logic of the complementary, whether in relation to a mathematical or physical continuum, as against discontinuity, or to a conceptual continuum and synthesis, thereby prohibiting complementarity and establishing a hierarchy between continuum and discontinuity. As becomes clear in the first *Logic*, and specifically in "Quantum," and throughout Hegel,<sup>29</sup> Hegelian *Aufhebung* as negating—if, along with negating, conserving, and superseding synthesis—conserves and supersedes in the direction of the continuum. That continuum is finally an absolute, and absolutely conscious and self-conscious, continuum, such

as Absolute Knowledge in the *Phenomenology*, or the Idea in the *Logic* and later works.<sup>30</sup> The double, or triple, economy of the *Aufhebung* as a negating, conserving, and superseding economy is considered in the first *Logic* in this context of the immediate mediation, that is, the “continuum” (*Logic*, 106–8). In that economy, “incommensurability” [Inkommensurabilität] between “the discrete and the continuous,” of which Hegel speaks in “Quantum” (*Logic*, 312) and which may be seen as complementarity, will be overcome.

This incommensurability can be overcome, however, only in a higher logical continuum determined by consciousness and self-consciousness, and specifically against the logic of mathematical thinking. Hegel is quite ambivalent about the capacity of differential calculus, and Newton’s and Leibniz’s mathematics in this respect,<sup>31</sup> and as I have pointed out, he, interestingly, prefers Lagrange’s version of differential calculus. Mathematical or scientific logic and knowledge are held to be inferior to a more self-conscious and, by the same token, more intersubjective and more historical philosophical knowledge—and not without reason, although one still needs an economy of nonformal logic very different from Hegel’s—a general economy. We must understand the nonscientific, including the philosophical, genealogy of scientific or mathematical theories. In this sense, in the shadow of Hegel, the contributions of Husserl and Heidegger, or before Hegel, Kant, were momentous, whatever the problematic dimensions of their analyses. Hegel’s position serves him as a platform for his critique of mathematical formalism or formalism in general as a kind of philosophical mathematism, specifically as lacking in self-consciousness. While Hegel’s analysis in the first *Logic* and elsewhere obviously cannot be restricted to the question and the analysis of self-consciousness, the role of self-consciousness in Hegel’s *determination* of all major concepts of philosophy and of thinking is irreducible. No Hegelian concept can be considered outside the economy of consciousness and self-consciousness. This irreducibility can be demonstrated in the analysis of the first *Logic*, even leaving aside that the overall determination by self-consciousness is as much inescapable in the *Logic* as everywhere in Hegel, defining all his logic. The process of full overcoming is, it should not be forgotten, conceived as History and *Geist*. The fully self-conscious *Geist* is the Subject of Hegel’s *Logic*, the Subject, in great measure, constructed by the *Phenomenology*. What makes Hegel different from his prede-



cessors is that his *logic* is the logic of self-consciousness and history, and the continuum that unifies them.<sup>32</sup>

Bohr's early work on "complementary epistemology," via Riemann's theory of multivalued functions mentioned earlier, and some of his subsequent analogies between quantum mechanical and mental processes continually engage the question of self-consciousness and reflexivity. As Folse comments: "Bohr never put these [early] ideas in writing and his explication of them in his last interview is, by his own admission, 'very, very obscure.' The basic scheme, however, seems to be as follows. In attempting to describe one's own consciousness, *i.e.* the consciousness one directly experiences, one must inevitably make a distinction between that consciousness as the object of description and the subject consciousness which experiences it" (*The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*, 175).

One may in fact argue that elaborations of these ideas are factored in or textured throughout Bohr's philosophical, or again anti-philosophical, work on complementarity, although it is true that his analysis of physics itself offers us much more effective theories and models in this respect. One also can cite Bohm, who follows Bohr's ideas: "[Asking] for a detailed description of how an electron is moving . . . is analogous to asking for a detailed description of what we are thinking about while we are reflecting on some definite subject. As soon as we begin to give this detailed description, we are no longer thinking about the subject in question, but are instead thinking about giving a detailed description" (Bohm, 171).

Bohr continues to reflect upon the analogy, and indeed the interaction, between complementarity and self-consciousness, throughout his life, and he specifically refers to it in concluding the final version of his Como paper introducing complementarity (1927): "The hindrances met with on this path originate above all in the fact that, so to say, every word in the language refers to our ordinary perception. In the quantum theory we meet this difficulty at once in the question of the inevitability of the feature of irrationality characterizing the quantum postulate. I hope, however, that the idea of complementarity is suited to characterize the situation, which bears a deep-going analogy to the general difficulty in the formation of human ideas, inherent in the distinction between subject and object" (*ATDN*, 90–91).<sup>33</sup>

The analogy is in part determined by the fact that quantum mechanics

as theory, specifically complementarity, engages a rigorous examination of the process of observation itself. In this sense, it is fundamentally reflexive in contrast to classical physics, although by the same token, it demands a radical critique of all classical reflexivity. Furthermore, since observation and measurement are themselves quantum processes, an analysis must always consider at least two quantum processes. Thus there is a natural relation between complementarity and Bohr's earlier epistemological thinking. The relation between the two processes is not only metaphoric but also metonymic. The demarcation or, as it is sometimes called, the "cut" between the observing and the observed in quantum physics is arbitrary. It is determined powerfully, but not uniquely or unequivocally, by the conditions of theory and practice and by given experimental arrangements.<sup>34</sup>

Bohr's ideas obviously have many sources, some of them in quantum physics, such as Heisenberg's work on uncertainty relations, others in philosophy, psychology, and other developments in the humanities and social sciences. As Pais notes, "already in 1891 [William] James introduced the term 'complementarity' to denote a quality of consciousness in schizophrenics." Pais adds: "Since it is not clear how much of James Bohr had read, nor when he did so, I do not know (but regard it neither as probable nor as interesting) whether Bohr took over that term from James" (*Niels Bohr's Times*, 424). I think that Pais undervalues the general influence of James's and related philosophical and psychological ideas on Bohr. But he may well be correct insofar as the term 'complementarity' is concerned. James's usage denotes in fact an absolute split of the complementary strata of schizophrenic consciousness (*The Principles of Psychology* 1, 206). As such this usage may in fact be opposed to Bohr's revolutionary idea of engaging the features that are mutually exclusive, yet both necessary, and that must therefore be utilized jointly but at the same time without synthesis. Bohr, as it were, suspends theory between the highest conscious mastery possible and schizophrenia. In a certain sense, Hegel may be seen as confronting the same problem; and at certain points, from the present perspective at the highest points of his text, he comes much closer to Bohr and complementarity than James does, although he never quite reaches this understanding either. To do so, he would have to be Nietzsche.

Within the limits of consciousness and self-consciousness, Hegel has certainly already elaborated in the *Phenomenology* the problematics of reflexivity; and *within these limits*, that is, short of a radical, general economic deconstruction of reflexivity and self-consciousness, it may not be possible to exceed Hegel. Even Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein* in *Being and Time*, arguably the most rigorous attempt of that type, never transgresses these Hegelian limits radically enough. In order to do so, one needs the unconscious and general economy. The latter are not Bohr's terms, insofar as he speaks of mental processes. As this study argues, however, Bohr offers a great deal of general economic logic, insofar as one can still speak of logic under these conditions, even though we still need all the classical logic we can master.

A comprehensive corresponding theory—complementarity as general economy—requires a kind of analysis of history, interpretation, or theory similar to that which Bohr undertook in relation to quantum phenomena. Such a theory would necessitate, among other things, the deconstruction of epistemology initiated by Nietzsche and undertaken throughout the intellectual history at issue in the present study. In many ways, this history culminates in Derrida's project, where both deconstruction of the previous historico-theoretical regime and construction of a general economic matrix proceed by way of direct textual encounters, specifically via Nietzsche, Freud, and Bataille.

In principle, then, some of the relevant texts could have been available to Bohr for the general theory of complementarity in relation to the fields of social and human sciences. They could have been used as a point of reference, instead of, or rather *complementary* to, the classical sources to which Bohr refers, although in the latter case, too, he does so loosely rather than rigorously. Indirectly, such more general economic ideas may have affected Bohr's thinking, in part via Bohr's interactions with Einstein, Born, Heisenberg, or Pauli, who corresponded with and at some point was analyzed by Jung. As I indicated earlier, Jung and several other authors attempted to describe psychological processes, especially the interaction between consciousness and the unconscious, in terms of complementarity, although they used complementarity more classically—less complementarily—than Bohr himself.<sup>35</sup> These works never matched the power of Bohr's ideas, at least insofar as the question of reflexivity is

concerned. Reflexivity inhibits itself so as to demand a general economy and complementarity, which finally makes full self-consciousness, whether individual or collective, impossible. Bohr may have sensed this fundamentally problematic character of the concept of self-consciousness. The economy is analogous, although not identical, to the inhibitions enacted by the observation and measurement of quantum events.

Hegel is aware of some of the factors inhibiting reflexivity; and in great measure, the whole Hegelian economy is designed to explore the conditions of the possibility of overcoming these inhibitions. But he is also quite unaware of other, more radically general economic, inhibitions, such as the radical loss in representation and consciousness. Whether they are perceived and suspended, or suspended without being perceived, in the end the suspension of such inhibitions, in Hegel or elsewhere, is never rigorously possible. This impossibility reveals—that is, *conceals*—a blind spot and “bottomless abyss” from which a deconstruction of the Hegelian system can be enacted.

The “bottomless abyss,” one of the most fashionable commonplace phrases of deconstruction, was also one of Bohr’s favorite phrases. Bohr may have first encountered it in a book by Paul Martin Møller, where it was again used in a description of self-consciousness.<sup>36</sup> Invoking the “bottomless abyss,” however, does not in itself suffice to establish mutual influence or the parity between an abyssal and a general economy. The Nietzschean or Derridean abyss, the abyss without truth, is different from the Heideggerian abyss, the abyss of truth; there are certainly Hegelian abysses as well, also “the abysses of truth.”<sup>37</sup> One can respond quite differently to the vision, or dizziness, of the abyss. Bohr has his different proximities and distances, different complementarities, to many different thinkers of the abyss, from Democritus, the founder of atomistic thinking, who also spoke of the abyss—“We know nothing of reality; for truth lies in the abyss”<sup>38</sup>—to Hegel, and then to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida, and possibly several others who could be invoked here. Bohr liked to quote Schiller: “Only wholeness leads to clarity / and Truth dwells in the abyss” [*Nur dies Fülle führt Klarheit / Und im Abgrund wohnt die Wahrheit*] (*Sayings of Confucius*)—a sentiment not unrelated to the ideas of Schiller with which Hegel closes the *Phenomeno-*

logy. Yet complementarity offers a vision very different from Schiller's and Hegel's alike—a general as opposed to a restricted economy. It suspends all these notions—reality, wholeness, truth, and even abyss—except as, in Bohr's own terms, “idealizations” engaged by complementary descriptions. There is nothing behind them—no reality, wholeness, or truth—that would not obey the same law. To say so, however, is quite different from saying that there is a truth, wholeness, or reality dwelling in or constituting the abyss. The latter claim would never enable one to depart from Hegel; once such thinking is in place, Hegel becomes right again, or always already right.

Hegel, however, can only assert his logic; he cannot sustain it. As Derrida's and other readings, both those following deconstruction and a few earlier ones, show, in practice, and against himself, against his aims and desires, Hegel's textual logic can be only a logic of incommensurability, indeterminacy, undecidability; this sort of logic leads to complementarity rather than to dialectic and the continuum. Against himself, against his logic, Hegel is, according to Derrida, “the first thinker of writing [premier penseur de l'écriture]” (*Of Grammatology*, 26; *De la grammatologie*, 41).

At issue in the transformation of Hegel is, first, a kind of quantum or complementary, as opposed to continuous, theory of history, and, second, the incompleteness and undecidability of logic or theory in general. The major consequence of this transformation is the complementarity of history and theory, as opposed to Hegelian unity. One can argue, however, as I shall do here, that history is always Hegel's logic, even though this logic cannot be restricted to the question of history in its narrow sense, which compels us always to speak of the unity of history and philosophy in Hegel. History as mediation—but, as opposed to the general economy, a self-conscious mediation—controls Hegel's logic. It is the logic of the unity of history and knowledge, of history and self-consciousness. Hegel's logic, however, and Hegel's *Logic* offer us, along with incommensurability, a good—even perfect—term or metaphor: *quantum*.<sup>39</sup> No matter from which source we may derive it, Hegel has offered it to us, even if he in turn received it from elsewhere—from many sources, in fact, and even if he could never possibly have conceived of its modern, Planckian, limits, and even if he offers it to us to be used against himself.

## Transformations and Complementarity

On both the historical and theoretical planes of its operation, complementarity as a matrix multiply engages the specific complementarity of continuity and discontinuity. As the preceding analysis demonstrates, however, the overall matrix cannot be contained or controlled by this complementarity alone. Many other complementarities must be engaged. We may in fact need them in order to account for various continuities and discontinuities or their complementary interactions. The subtitle 'complementarity' of this study, that of history and the unconscious, in particular if further conjoined or complementarized with matter, is itself the *efficacy* of many, but *not all*, diverse effects in the economy of scientific, theoretical, or literary, or even political transformations, either more or less evolutionary, or continuous, or more or less revolutionary, or discontinuous. Specific complementarities emerge as multiple and disseminating "effects," effects without unequivocally determined or unique causes, in a general economy of description and analysis.

The general economic character of this efficacy, by definition, prohibits seeing any given complementarity—or, as Derrida's analysis shows, anything—as primary. As a result, the self-referentiality of the transformational economy of, complementarily, continuities and breaks becomes extended: the emergence of the economy of history as *complementarity* is itself a multiply complementary process. The complementarity of continuities and breaks or an even richer and more efficacious complementarity of history and the unconscious, or any specific complementarity, must thus always be placed within a broader, general economic matrix.

The complementarity of continuity and discontinuity, however, has enormous theoretical and historical importance. In the first place, as we have seen, it defines "the *structure* of scientific revolutions," or indeed of any revolution, even though by itself it does not fully determine a corresponding theoretical *economy* as a general economy, which would entail a broader array of complementarities. A revolution always engages continuity and discontinuities at once, although possibly along very different *lines*. Or at least both types of relations seem to be needed simultaneously in order to comprehend, or in relation to the classical theories, to re-comprehend or precomprehend, that space—or time, or both or

neither—of revolutions or radical transformations. Of course, one needs both continuity and discontinuity already in order to contrast them. At issue here, however, is a more complex and multiply perspectivized complementary operation of both continuities and discontinuities at each point.

A transition economy must function as a kind of bridge economy. One cannot move or “break with” into nothing, or ever begin for the *first* time, as the recent history of theory, particularly the deconstruction of the concept of origin in Derrida, has taught us. A break can be only a transition to, an entrance into, or engagement of another continuity, that is, another complex network with diverse historical and other dimensions. This interplay proceeds along irreducibly disseminating lines and transitions. For as quantum mechanics, it involves “from the classical point of view, an irrational element” (ATDN, 10), which leads one, first, to the complementarity of continuity and discontinuity and, then, to a further, finally irreducible, expansion of the complementary field. In a certain sense, there are only bridges, only “in-betweens.” Their structure may be extraordinarily complex, at times prohibiting even a provisional termination of disseminating networks of continuities and discontinuities, or other complementarities involved. At certain points, however, the process makes possible more pronounced effects of transformation and break or, conversely, produces the effects of continuities and evolutions. Suspending one or another and thus suspending the complementary, in however complex a fashion, would produce or reinstate a restricted economy. In all rigor, all specific “in-betweens,” too, must be seen as effects, and they cannot have an unconditional primacy over the more defined trajectories or territories they connect or disconnect, or reconnect—or, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s terms, deterritorialize and reterritorialize.

The complementary economy of continuities and breaks constitutes one of the present study’s most important theses and analytic tools, in particular as concerns historical transformations, revolutions, or evolutions, but also in more general theoretical terms. This irreducible interaction of continuity and discontinuity is part of a conjunction of three structures—the complementarity of the continuous and the discontinuous; the complementarity of interpretive and, specifically historical, coordination or localization and causality; and complementarity itself as a relational economy and as a *general* economy. This conjunction consti-

tutes the major conceptual and metaphoric configuration of this study, particularly but not exclusively in relation to the question of history. The overall economy so emerging, however, allows and demands an infinite variety and dissemination of complementarities, double and multiple.

In Bohr's matrix of complementarity as an interpretation of quantum mechanics, the structures just listed form an analogously interactive conglomerate, accompanied by other complementarities, most specifically the complementarity of waves and particles. The latter is related, but not identical, to the complementarity of the continuous and the discontinuous. Waves and particles are complex mathematical and metaphorical formations even in classical physics, let alone in quantum mechanics, **especially** under the conditions of complementarity. Complementarity is **always** a deconstruction of the classical matrix insofar as the unequivocal opposition between the constituents of specific complementarities is concerned. The particles of quantum physics demand multiple complementary ensembles; and in full rigor, they can no longer be seen as particles—single atomized units.

Implying in the end a much more complex landscape, the play of complementarities suggested in this analysis thus resembles rather closely the "behavior" of quantum objects under the conditions of complementarity. The wave effects or continuous effects, or the particle effects or discontinuous effects, of a given particle such as the electron may manifest themselves in principle simultaneously at very distant points—theoretically, at any distance. Furthermore, they or the package as a whole so constructed may disappear and reappear according to the same law, thus ultimately making "whole" an impossible term. Under the rigorously necessary conditions of quantum electrodynamics as quantum field theory, in the case of any system, even a one-particle system, such as an electron, one must always speak of infinitely many particles, and of a potentially infinite variety of complementary properties and descriptions. The theory and the experiment, themselves complementary, thus yield a strange, post-Cubist, or Joycean or Proustian landscape. The Joycean or Proustian landscape, however, may in turn supply, and has supplied, pictures and metaphors to the natural and, of course, the human sciences, or to history throughout the period at issue.<sup>40</sup> But these authors were in turn quite possibly influenced by the landscapes of modern science,



Proust's great work primarily by relativity and Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, and perhaps already *Ulysses*, by quantum physics as well.

The borrowing of the term and principle of complementarity from quantum mechanics is amply justified, both specifically in relation to the complementarity of continuity and discontinuity, and, more generally, to the complementary description of any given historical or theoretical configuration. Complementarity is immensely rich in its conceptual and metaphoric potential. As I pointed out earlier, while multiple analogies and the metaphoric transfer of pictures, or nonpictorial configurations, may be engaged in both directions, the complementarity, indeterminacy, undecidability, or heterogeneity of intellectual history and its transformations is much greater, specifically in its perspectival diversity, than the complementarity of quantum physics. The *way* of thinking itself is what makes this model so powerful and productive—implicative. What is a discontinuity, even a revolution, from one perspective is often from another viewpoint a continuous development; this fact is part of the reason why one always needs the double structure of continuities and breaks. The play of complementarity is fluid, constantly in transformation. In the end, the interplay of continuities and breaks, or other structures or pictures, may be incalculable or undecidable, even though any given account may have to depend on the closure of continuity, the closure of discontinuity, and the closure of complementarity.

Bohr's complementarity as a theoretical transformation conforms to the economy of simultaneous, or complementary, continuities and breaks, as part of a broader self-referential or reflexive economy of the history of complementarity as multiply complementary. Many continuities and breaks—interactively heterogeneous, heterogeneously interactive—together with preceding configurations in science and other fields, have affected these developments and the thinking of the major figures involved, such as Bohr, the author of complementarity, or Planck, Einstein, Heisenberg, Born, Schrödinger, Dirac, and others. To a degree, the continuity extends all the way back to Democritus's conception of the interaction of chance and necessity. These figures also had different views upon or ideologies of the issue itself: the possibility and necessity of continuities and breaks with classical physics, and in some cases with philosophy as well. Such is the case with Einstein and Spinoza, two great

thinkers of continuity, and other philosophical influences on Einstein, via Ernst Mach and others, specifically Kant. Thus the historico-theoretical configuration of quantum mechanics also offers a self-referential meta-configuration; the historical process of theoretical transformation obeys the law that is conceptually a central, although not the only, part of the theory—the interplay of the continuous and the discontinuous.

This interplay contrasts with Einstein's continuity with classical physics, and indeed with classical philosophy, which defines itself and reality in terms of the continuum. Bohr's break with classical theories, again both in science and philosophy, and with Einstein himself, occurs by way of the quantum postulate, which introduces irreducible discreteness and thereby indeterminacy into the picture, to which Einstein's own contribution as a physicist was momentous. Offering a complementary rendition of this picture does not render this break absolutely discontinuous, however, since it retains the continuous, classical part of complementarity and maintains a general correspondence principle with classical physics. The latter principle establishes the connections between quantum and classical theory—within the classical limits both theories are equivalent. According to Bohr, the quantum postulate “must, on one hand, greatly limit the field of application of the classical theories. On the other hand, the necessity of making an extensive use, nevertheless, of the classical concepts, upon which depends ultimately the interpretation of all experience, gave rise to the formulation of the so-called correspondence principle which expresses our endeavours to utilize all the classical concepts by giving them a suitable quantum-theoretical re-interpretation” (*ATDN*, 8). The correspondence principle thus suggests the role of the classical theory in the new framework, on the one hand, and a kind of closure of classical concepts, on the other. The idea may be seen as analogous, although not equivalent, to the notion of the closure of metaphysics in Derrida.

Thus it is complementarily a break and a continuity toward complementarity, in fact proving a transformation more radical than any absolute break, which could never be radical enough. But one may enact *radical* breaks. My claim here is that complementarity defines one of the most radically anti-Hegelian transformations of thinking enacted in this century—a break that also affected virtually every field conceivable. In a way, complementarity defines the twentieth century. Planck's law of radi-

ation, the first encounter with the quantum character of nature—quantum nature of nature—and complementarity in the case of the so-called black body radiation as a quantum phenomenon, dates back to 1900. As Pais comments, “Were I to designate just one single discovery in twentieth-century physics as revolutionary I would unhesitatingly nominate Planck’s [discovery] of December 1900” (*Inward Bound*, 134). In this view Pais follows both Einstein: “This discovery [the quantum theory] set science a fresh task: that of finding a new conceptual basis for all physics” (*Out of my Later Years*, 229), and Bohr: “A new epoch was inaugurated in physical science by Planck’s discovery of the quantum of action” (*Philosophy in Mid Century*, 308), both of whom he cites in *Niels Bohr’s Times* (87).

The triple complementary economy discussed here—the complementarity of continuity and discontinuity; the complementarity of history and the unconscious, or of matter, history, and the unconscious; and complementarity as a matrix and a general economy—is a transformation of, and thus a continuity and a break with, Hegel. We must, yet are never quite able to, break with him. By definition, however, as a general economy, the transformation at issue involves multiple complementary, and multiply complementary, configurations and conceptual and metaphoric chains. Some of them emerge against and in the shadow of Hegel, or both at once; others proceed along different trajectories. The relationships at issue cannot be only, or always necessarily, to Hegel; in this respect, Hegel constitutes a decisive, but not a unique juncture. Hegel’s role is not unique even where the question of history is concerned, although here Hegel’s shadow is enormous and his influence pervasive. Complementarity suggests the possibility, and at some point the necessity, of a break with Hegel so radical that Hegel, or history, would no longer be a part of that which would emerge. Such a break cannot be seen as absolute, however. First, one can never be absolutely certain whether a full or even partial departure is achieved, any more than one can be certain that one correctly reads or fully follows Hegel. Second, one cannot be certain that Hegel will not return at some later point.

According to Derrida, a general economy, here specifically of *différance*, radically jeopardizes what Derrida calls “Heideggerian hope: . . . the quest for the proper word and the unique name [*l’espérance heideggerienne*: . . . la quête du mot propre et du nom unique]” (*Margins*, 27;

*Marges*, 29). The name to which Derrida most specifically refers is the Heideggerian name “Being.” But as he also points out, no name—for example, *différance*—escapes this jeopardy of *being* replaced or suspended, taken over by forces it cannot control or master (*Margins*, 7; *Marges*, 7).

The same economy, which is a general economy, must therefore apply to the name Hegel, or Heidegger, although Derrida himself speaks of “Heidegger’s *uncircumventable* mediation [l’incontournable méditation heideggerienne]” (*Margins*, 22; *Marges*, 22; emphasis added). He also suggests a similarly uncircumventable relation to Hegel throughout his texts. A continuity or a complementarity of proximity to and distance from Hegel always may, and often does, reenter the picture. Such, for example, is the case when Derrida inscribes *différance* against Hegelian difference and contradiction, and differentiates it from “differentiation” as a more Hegelian, or in general more metaphysical, economy. Both difference and contradiction, often as each other, are, as Derrida says referring specifically to the first *Logic*, figured by Hegel

only in order to resolve it, to interiorize it, to lift it up (according to the syllogistic process of speculative dialectic) into the self-presence of an onto-theological or onto-teleological synthesis. *Différance* (at a point of almost absolute proximity to Hegel, as I have emphasized, I think, in the lecture and elsewhere: everything, what is most decisive, is played out, here, in what Husserl calls “subtle nuances,” or Marx “micrology”) must sign the point of rupture with the system of the *Aufhebung* and with the speculative dialectic. (*Positions*, 44; *Positions* 59–60; translation modified)

In “*Différance*” Derrida, as we have seen, speaks on the “infinitesimal and radical displacement [une sorte de déplacement à la fois infime et radical]” of Hegel (*Margins*, 14; *Marges*, 15). The latter is itself a relation of continuity and rupture, where continuity is inscribed by way of the metaphor from differential calculus—the calculus of the continuum.

Derrida’s approach also suggests the following interesting theoretical strategy, which he uses very effectively. If one proceeds by rigorously reading Hegel and following Hegel’s text very closely, one can, at a certain point, displace his conceptual chain—ever so slightly, infinitesimally. The results, however, are radical—to the point, for example, of making

"concepts" no longer possible. Instead one encounters structures, such as *différance*, that are neither words nor concepts, which at a certain point make concepts, including Hegelian concepts, possible, but in the end also dislocate these concepts and displace them.

The economy of proximity-distance just described can be traced throughout Derrida's various encounters, beginning with his work on Husserl. His comment in the context of Levinas may be its most significant early formulation: "This is perhaps the occasion to emphasize . . . a theme that we will enlarge upon later: Levinas is very close to Hegel, much closer than he admits, and at the very moment when he is apparently opposed to Hegel in the most radical fashion. This is a situation he must share with all anti-Hegelian thinkers, and whose final significance calls for much thought" ("Violence and Metaphysics," *Writing and Difference*, 99; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 147). It is not that Levinas's relationship to Hegel, or Heidegger and Husserl, as considered by Derrida, is the same as or even quite analogous to, Derrida's, who does "admit" his proximity alongside the distance; Levinas's may well be closer to, though not identical to, a reversal of Hegel, as considered earlier, than to the Derridean economy of proximity-distance. Derrida's relationships to Levinas himself, or Husserl, Heidegger, and a number of other thinkers he considers, would follow the economy of proximity-distance at issue, allowing of course for the specificity of these different texts and of Derrida's engagements with them.

Whether such a relation to Hegel, Heidegger, Levinas, or other figures similarly engaged by Derrida is irreducible and, if so, to what degree is a different question. For it cannot be absolutely irreducible, which is the main point at the moment. I do not think Derrida would, or should, want to make such a claim. Nor would one want to suggest that, *in theoretical terms*, Derrida makes Hegel or philosophy in general into his own "*Geist*." The suggestion may, however, be intriguing enough in its quasi-psychoanalytic aspects; it is certainly implicative of rich metaphorizations, particularly given the many transferences and countertransferences it involves.

The ultimate precursor of Derrida in this respect could still be Heidegger, whose meditation remains, according to Derrida, "uncircumventable." Heidegger, we recall, speaks of the economy of *Dasein* as at once the closest and the most distant from Being. On the one hand, Derrida

powerfully exposes this economy as a form of metaphysics of presence, most specifically in "The Ends of Man" (in *Margins*). But on the other hand, he translates it into a relation between deconstruction and philosophy, specifically Hegel and Heidegger, and its closure. The economy of this relation, to be considered in more detail in the next chapter, is concomitant with the economy and complementarity of proximity-distance at issue. And yet, in this respect too, Derrida's ultimate precursor would still be Hegel, who, it can be shown, from the *Phenomenology* on, also inscribes a relation of simultaneously both infinitesimal proximity and radical difference in approaching the relationships between human philosophy, and thus himself, and the Hegelian absolute subject—*Geist*—or later the Idea. Derrida, then, could be read as translating this relation into the relation between *différance* and Hegel. But, then, the ultimate precursor may also be Socrates, who styles his discourse according to the same principle, or Socrates/Plato; and the relationship between Socrates and Plato, too, is that of simultaneously infinitesimal proximity and radical difference, as Derrida in fact, or in effect, shows in *The Post Card*.

One cannot *simply* leave Hegel behind, of course, particularly when history is concerned. But it is also true in a great many other cases; and one would not want to restrict Hegel's analysis to the question of history, however irreducible the latter may be in Hegel. The power and pervasiveness of Hegel is a major point and a major claim of this study, against and in the shadow of Hegel—*against*, but against *Hegel*, and in the *shadow*, but in the shadow of *Hegel*. This proposition need not imply, however, that other studies, other "againsts," and other "shadows" are not possible and indeed necessary. Also, as Derrida suggests, it is necessary

to bring the critical [i.e., deconstructive] operation to bear against the unceasing reappropriation of this [deconstructive] work of the simulacrum by a dialectics of the Hegelian type (which even idealizes and 'semantizes' the value of *work*), for Hegelian idealism consists precisely of a *relève* [*Aufhebung*] of the binary oppositions of classical idealism, a resolution of contradiction into a third term that comes in order to *aufheben*, to deny while raising up, while idealizing, while sublimating into an anamnestic interiority [*Erinnerung*], while *interning* difference in a self-presence. (*Positions*, 43; *Positions*, 59)

By virtue of the nature of its matrix and project, however, complementarity need not perhaps have such a close relation to Hegel, or at least need not remain “still a question of elucidating the relationship to Hegel [c’est encore le rapport à Hegel qu’il s’agit d’élucider]” (*Positions*, 43; *Positions*, 59). As such, complementarity may be contrasted to deconstruction, or Derrida’s deconstruction, or at least Derrida’s earlier work. I shall consider various differences between the two theoretical economies and their relationship to Hegel throughout this study.

It may be pointed out, however, that I speak here of the proximities and distances between theoretical economies, specifically the restricted and the general, as opposed to those between their structural constituents, such as continuities and discontinuities. Certain classical notions and theories of continuity must be retained within the complementary matrix. Various Hegelian continuums therefore may be retained by a new matrix, by virtue of the common closure of classical and complementary theories and by virtue of the theoretical effectiveness of Hegelian structures. This retention may be seen as analogous to the necessity of retaining classical physics in quantum mechanics and classical “pictures” in complementary descriptions, via Bohr’s correspondence principle. In other words, to the extent that Hegel is retained, one can speak of complementary relations to the corresponding matrix. Even so, however, that matrix is transformed by the general economy of such a complementarity, a transformation that refigures the limits and functioning of classical theories and complicates the application of the correspondence principle.

Such complementary relations, however, are quite different from the proximity-distance economy and the specific procedure of breaking radically from Hegel *at the point of the greatest proximity to Hegel*, as suggested and enacted by Derrida. Or rather, the latter is one possible complementarity, leading to a more general complementarity with philosophy, by way of the closure of philosophy. By contrast, a complementary continuity as just described need not always constitute the proximity or continuity of the respective theoretical economies themselves. Such a complementary continuity characterizes specifically both Bohr’s and Nietzsche’s theoretical procedures, which thus also illustrate the possibility of transforming classical theories from the outside, by engaging exterior chains and networks, and as such can be contrasted to Derrida’s economy of proximity-distance as just considered.

I do not want to oversimplify the situation. At stake here is a complex manifold of relationships to Hegel, connectivities and dis-connections, and complementarily both, proceeding along different lines, some more Derridean, others more Nietzschean or Heideggerian, and some indeed Hegelian. In addition, one could elucidate one's relationships with Hegel, or remain in proximity or simultaneous proximity-distance to him, without intentionally doing so. Derrida makes this point in relation to Hegel or philosophy in general. That, too, need not—cannot—always be the case. Nor do breaks, particularly radical breaks, have to occur at the point of either the greatest or an infinitesimal proximity to Hegel, Heidegger, or any other given theory or field, such as philosophy. Proceeding via Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida, in addition to Hegel himself, the complementarity of history and the unconscious—or even more so, complementarity as a matrix—involves many different relations and complementarities, continuities and breaks, proximities and distances.

Thus, Hegel constitutes but a moment in the history of continuum thinking, which begins with Plato or even earlier and gains ascendancy with Aristotle. This history itself belongs to, and is in part the history of the repression of, what Nietzsche calls active interpretation—beyond good and evil and beyond philosophy. Because philosophy also actively, perhaps even in spite of itself primarily, engages the unconscious, this history also becomes that of a twofold repression—of the unconscious and of the history of the unconscious—or, in Derrida's more general economic terms, the history of *différance* and *writing* on one hand, and the closure of presence and the metaphysics of presence on the other.<sup>41</sup> The latter, repressed history, however, is also the efficacy of this repression; indeed, the return of the repressed can be detected by a critical or deconstructive analysis as operating continuously in this history. In great measure, this detection defines Derrida's deconstruction and its proximity to the theory and praxis, or the practice, of psychoanalysis.

The *break* from Hegel as the thinker of the continuum is, let me stress, not a shift to thinking in terms of discontinuities, although that move unquestionably constitutes an important moment of theoretical, historical, and political thinking, from evolutions to revolutions, including in Nietzsche. Instead, it is a shift toward thinking in terms of the *complementarity* of continuities and discontinuities, as against the Hegelian



unity or dialectic of both, or of any other pairs. It is thus also a movement toward multiplicity, toward massively parallel—as opposed to binary—processing.

This point is important, for Hegel is, once again, the thinker of the overcoming of the discontinuous no less than the thinker of the continuum. As a shift to complementarity, a very radical break is at issue, in many ways more radical than from continuum to discontinuity. Moving simply from continuity to discontinuity or, as we have seen, any simple reversal of that type, would be no break at all: in asserting such a break, one might overlook, for example, the role of the discontinuous in Hegel. In the first place, thinking in terms of the continuum—or conversely discontinuity—cannot be suspended because of both the psychological and even the biological necessity of presence, or difference. In addition, we might want to continue to utilize the theoretical power of the continuum and related concepts. We do not know what Bohr thought when he drew that last picture on the blackboard before his death—the picture of a continuous curve on a Riemann surface. He might have had in mind a necessary break from the continuum; or a necessary continuity with the continuum; or more likely, complementarily both; or a still other relation that a new, as yet unheard of, physics would require; or he might have been thinking of something else altogether.

# LANDSCAPES

A shadow hangs over all the rest

—Joyce



## CHAPTER

As an entrance to an analysis of Hegel and Hegelianism from the perspective of general economy and complementarity, this chapter proceeds by traversing a historico-theoretical landscape in the shadow of Hegel, using most particularly Nietzsche's, Bataille's, and Derrida's texts. While the unfolding analysis *metaphorically* indicates the irreducible complexity of this landscape, only a small portion of it can be explored *metonymically* either by this or any other given text, as this study argues directly, propositionally, and by its very mode of presentation.

The first section is a double application of the metaphor of "chains," engaged throughout this chapter. On the one hand are the chains of Hegel's text, a text that can never be fully traversed both for practical reasons—the enormity of Hegel's labor—and for structural, general economic reasons, thus putting into question the very notion of such a complete chain. On the other hand are the chains of logic, their (in)completeness and (un)decidability. Both themes, while interactive or complementary in general, converge logically in the question of Hegel's conceptual logic; for Hegel's is the logic of logic itself, formal or transcendental. We cannot simply avoid the problems of Hegel and Hegelianism in view

of the structural incompleteness and undecidability at issue, but must confront them under these conditions.

The second section extends the question of Hegel by way of a parallel processing of the questions and landscapes defining the field of this study, via Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, Derrida, and related authors and themes. "Who is he, Hegel?" and "Who are we?" become the same question. At a certain level, such is always the case, of course. Here, however, at issue is a specific configuration or scene—landscape and theater—reasonably well defined as poststructuralist, but looking beyond poststructuralism and toward a more radical departure from Hegel.

The third section continues to explore, in this collocational and complementary mode, the shadows and chiaroscuros, and some suns, of this post-Hegelian, but thus still Hegelian, landscape, which we must simultaneously inhabit and yet—difficult, if not impossible, as it is—leave or transform.

## Chains

Much of modern intellectual history, certainly the history of the question of history, proceeds in the shadow of Hegel, although, even in the case of the greatest encounters with Hegel, it does so more outside than inside Hegel's enormous text. To remain at once inside and outside of a text is, in one way or another, always unavoidable. But to remain or not to remain in one shadow or another—that is a different matter. It is difficult to leave Hegel behind altogether, even when one wants to transform the scene—landscape or theater, theoretical or political—and even when one succeeds in doing so. Few others can rival Hegel in this respect. Conversely, in confronting Hegel's text, it is difficult to traverse its inside. The difficulty arises first of all by virtue of the immensity of Hegel's labor. One needs considerable outside help when one is inside Hegel's text, even beyond the general impossibility of being fully inside anything. Even in confronting Hegel, one cannot avoid avoiding Hegel, although by doing so and thus disrupting the chain of Hegelian reason, one increases the all too common, "all too human" risk of Hegel's self-evidence, of which Bataille speaks, of already knowing Hegel. As a result, one often ends by chaining oneself to the rock of Hegel all the more securely. As Derrida writes on Bataille and Hegel:

"Often Hegel seems to me self-evident, but the self-evident is a heavy burden" (*Le Coupable*). . . . Misconstrued, treated lightly, Hegelianism only extends its historical domination, finally unfolding its immense enveloping resources without obstacle. Hegelian self-evidence seems lighter than ever at the moment when it finally bears down with its full weight. Bataille had feared this too: heavy, "it will be even more so in the future." . . .

Bataille, thus, took Hegel seriously, and took absolute knowledge seriously. And to take such a system seriously, Bataille knew, was to prohibit oneself from extracting concepts from it, or from manipulating isolated propositions, drawing effects from them by transportation into a discourse foreign to them: "Hegel's thoughts are interdependent to the point of it being impossible to grasp their meaning, if not in the necessity of the movement which constitutes their coherence" (*E [L'Expérience] intérieure*], p. 193). Bataille doubtless put into question the idea or meaning of the chain in Hegelian reason, but did so by thinking the chain as such, in its totality, without ignoring its internal rigor. (*Writing and Difference*, 251, 253; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 369, 371)

This "textual drama," as Derrida calls it, is still more complex, however. In the first place, "in his interminable explication with Hegel, Bataille doubtless had only a restricted and indirect access to the texts themselves. This did not prevent him from bringing his reading and his question to bear on the crucial point of the decision" (*Writing and Difference*, 253; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 372). That strange textual economy, interminable and limited at once, leads Derrida to the chains of Bataille's own text and, by implication, Derrida's:

Taken one by one and immobilized outside their syntax, all of Bataille's concepts are Hegelian. We must acknowledge this without stopping here. For if one does not grasp the rigorous effect of the trembling to which he submits these concepts, the new configuration into which he displaces and reinscribes them, barely reaching it however, one would conclude, according to the case in hand, that Bataille is Hegelian or anti-Hegelian, or that he has muddled Hegel. One would be deceived each time. And one would miss the formal law which, necessarily enunciated by Bataille in a nonphilosophical mode, has constrained the relationship of all his concepts to those of Hegel, and through Hegel's concepts to the

concepts of the entire history of metaphysics. All of Bataille's concepts, and not only those to which we must limit ourselves here, in order to reconstitute the enunciation of this law." (*Writing and Difference*, 253–54; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 373)

This statement no doubt also refers to Derrida's concepts. More importantly, it poses a general question of textual chains and the different economies, restricted or general, that organize them. By breaking these chains, one risks remaining chained to the old system, to a restricted economy, and specifically to Hegel, and rigor alone, critical or theoretical, may not be enough to shake off the Hegelian chains, either.

Bataille and Derrida have a number of major precursors in this attitude, beginning with Hegel himself. Hegel repeatedly issues similar warnings, for example, in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* or in the *Encyclopedia*: "No great expenditure of wit is needed to make fun of the maxim that Being and Nothing are the same, or rather to adduce absurdities which, it is erroneously asserted, are the consequences and illustrations of that maxim" (*Encyclopedia*, "Logic," no. 88).<sup>1</sup> The warning extends well beyond the more or less obvious and naive objections immediately considered by Hegel; and Hegel considers, in "Logic" and elsewhere, many serious and nontrivial objections as well. Hegel often anticipates and takes into account potential critiques of his ideas. His propositions are then offered and sustained at the next level, *after* their criticism or dismissal by skepticism, empiricism, and other modes of theorizing opposing Hegel's own are assessed and surpassed.<sup>2</sup> This anticipation has often been missed by Hegel's critics; and any given analysis, including naturally the present one, always risks repeating this omission.

Marx offers the following critical assessment of his contemporaries in *The German Ideology*: "The reason why not one of these modern critics has even attempted a comprehensive criticism of the Hegelian system, however much each professes to have advanced beyond Hegel," is, in fact, their "dependence on Hegel." "Their polemics against Hegel and against one another are confined to this—each extracts one side of the Hegelian system and turns this side against the whole system as well as against the sides extracted by others" (*The Marx-Engels Reader*, 148; translation modified). The question of "the chain in Hegelian reason" is the major issue in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* as well: "I

have deemed the concluding chapter of the present work—the dispute of the *Hegelian dialectics* and Hegelian philosophy in general—positively necessary, since the *critical theologians* of our day have not only not undertaken such a labor but have not even recognized its necessity—a necessary lack of thoroughness, since even the *critical* theologian remains a *theologian*” (*The Marx-Engels Reader*, 68; translation modified).<sup>3</sup>

In conceiving the encounter—“the settling of accounts”—with Hegel, the passage might be playing out, purposely or unconsciously, Hegel’s dialectic of master and slave. There all mastery is fundamentally related to consciousness and self-consciousness: one must *know* that which one attempts to master. In his *dependence on dialectic* Marx follows Hegel absolutely, almost as a slave, with what Bataille calls “servile dependence.” That is not a dishonorable position for Marx or for Hegel. One must go through a stage of slavery on the way to mastery, before one deviates, as Marx does in his reversal of Hegel<sup>4</sup>—a reversal that retains dialectic.

Bataille must also be thinking of masters and slaves in his own interactions with Hegel or Marx; and by insisting on the rigorously scientific—theoretical—character of general economy, he also maintains the highest possible theoretical consciousness, by means of which, and only by means of which, mastery is possible in Hegel and Marx. For Bataille, however, all forms of relationships, theoretical or political, that are *unconditionally* based on consciousness are forms of slavery; the irreducible, structural unconscious must be brought into play. The latter concept constitutes a crucial difference between Bataille’s sovereignty and Hegel’s mastery or lordship [Herrschaft]. At the level of theory, the introduction of this concept leads to the difference between the general economy—the science or, complementarily, science and anti-science of, complementarily, consciousness and the unconscious—and the restricted economy—the science of consciousness and self-consciousness, such as Hegel’s philosophy and Marx’s political economy. As a result, the very possibility of the project and the concept of science or theory becomes problematic and must be redefined general economically.

“The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it,” states the final and most famous of Marx’s theses on Feuerbach (*The Marx-Engels Reader*, 145). There is an even more famous utterance of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*—

also the final thesis, as it were: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win" (500). There are many masters of many other slaves in the immense theoretical and political consciousness and unconscious of this statement and its *manifestly* restricted economy. One master must still be Hegel, to whom Marx, a great dialectical laborer, remains chained by the chains of dialectical, conscious and self-conscious, reason. Certainly the thesis on Feuerbach follows Hegel's passage on "the owl of Minerva" in the *Philosophy of Right*, one of the most famous in Hegel: "When philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has the shape [Gestalt] of life grown old, and with the grey in grey life cannot rejuvenate, but can only understand itself [Wenn die Philosophie ihr Grau in Grau malt, dann ist eine Gestalt des Lebens alt geworden, und mit Grau in Grau läßt sie sich nicht verjüngen, sondern nur erkennen]" (*Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 13; *Werke* 7:28; translation modified).

A more immediate precursor of Derrida here would be Heidegger, who certainly does not take anything in Hegel lightly. Hegel's proposition cited earlier that "Being and Nothing are the same" has in fact elicited a lifelong meditation from Heidegger. In his *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, Heidegger writes: "Do not be in a hurry to criticize and to raise objections as they come to mind piecemeal. Instead go along with Hegel, go along at length and with patience, that is, with labor [Nicht voreilig kritisieren und stückweise, einfallweise Einwände vorbringen, sondern mitgehen, auf langhin mitgehen und mit Geduld, d. h. Arbeit mitgehen]" (*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 42; *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* 61; translation modified).<sup>5</sup>

The conceptual chains of dialectic are heavy *chains* to break or wear—for walking, let alone dancing, as Nietzsche often characterizes the best thinking. Can one break its chains and break out of its chains by way of theoretical revolution, abandoning philosophy, or even theory altogether, cutting the knot with a sword? Or should one extend them by theoretical craft in order to make them long enough or otherwise remake them to be free enough? But then how much freedom does one want, or can one afford? "Zarathustra, the *light* one," Nietzsche calls him. How light, how heavy? How light, how dark? How much of a shadow? And what makes him light? The lack of self-evidence, perhaps?

Enormous expenditures of intellectual energy are at stake; and if one wants to laugh, as Bataille finally does, at Hegel's desire not to lose or

waste any of this energy—to contain the entropy of mind—one had better do it *finally*. A good laugh is no easy or laughing matter. As Nietzsche, master of the great laugh, says, “he who laughs best today will also laugh last.” It is a rare gift, however, and a rare chance—certainly in Hegel’s case—to laugh *best*, without even being concerned with being right. But perhaps in order to do so one must know that one is right after all: “What does it matter if *I* remain right. I *am* much too right. And he who laughs best today will also laugh last [Was liegt daran, dass *ich* Recht behalte! Ich *habe* zu viel Recht.—Und wer heute am besten lacht, lacht auch zuletzt]” (*Twilight of the Idols; The Portable Nietzsche*, 473; KSA 6:66; translation modified).

Unlike and against Marx and Heidegger, and following Nietzsche, both Bataille and Derrida also put into question the idea of meaning as such and its totality as conscious mastery—which is perhaps in the end always Hegelian. It is the mastery of consciousness, or, according to Bataille, the slavery of consciousness. Mastery is only a form of slavery once consciousness and meaning, as in Hegel and Marx, govern one’s thought and writing—political, philosophical, or other. While materialist, Marx’s materialist political economy remains, by conviction, dialectical, Hegelian. It is a political economy of consciousness and meaning, and specifically historical consciousness and historical meaning, reaffirming *the* meaning and totality of history, the meaning of the totality of history.

The difference between the textual chains of restricted economy in Hegel and Marx and general economy in Nietzsche, Bataille, or Derrida is irreducible, although complex and at times equivocal; and the economies themselves are in turn different in each of these cases. A critique of dialectic need not exclude the *conscious* mastery of the Hegelian conceptual chain or networks. To the extent that such a mastery is possible, it is necessary. As a theory and at times practice of the unconscious, a general economy can in fact achieve a greater mastery of theory and reading than when “the unconscious” is excluded, repressed, or ignored. At the same time, however, no given approach would unconditionally guarantee anything, either. Even the most Hegelian strategies, old and old-fashioned as they may be or seem, could be very effective. Certainly, the effectiveness of a strategy always depends on *who* does the analysis or practices a given style. Hegel and Marx are often still better than some of the “most



advanced,” “up-to-date” critics, from Hegel’s contemporaries to the present. One might be reasonably certain that such will continue to be the case in the future.

Any general economy is bound—chained—to have a complex relation to Hegel. As Derrida writes in *Writing and Difference*:

Necessary and impossible, this excess [inscribed by Bataille] had to fold discourse into strange shapes. And, of course, constrain it to justify itself to Hegel indefinitely. Since more than a century of ruptures, of “surpassings” with or without “overturnings,” rarely has a relation to Hegel been so little definable: a complicity without reserve accompanies Hegelian discourse, “takes it seriously” up to the end, without an objection in philosophical form, while, however, a certain burst of laughter exceeds it and destroys its sense, or signals, in any event, the extreme point of “experience” which makes Hegelian discourse dislocate *itself*; and this can be done only through close scrutiny and full knowledge of what one is laughing at. (*Writing and Difference*, 253; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 371)

In itself, Hegel, as *text*, may not be strong enough to constrain one’s style in any given or determined way, as is suggested by the difference between different general economies, particularly by Nietzsche’s style. For Nietzsche’s text does not appear to be “constrained to justify itself to Hegel,” or to anything, “indefinitely.” Nietzsche’s chains, in either sense, are different from Derrida’s and Bataille’s, in turn two very different styles; and Derrida’s “of course” refers even more to Derrida than to Bataille.

Derrida speaks at one point of, “if not a replacement” of *différance*, at least of its “enmeshing [*enchaînement*: enchainment] itself in a *chain* [*chaîne*] that in truth it never will have governed” (*Margins*, 7; *Marges*, 7). These may prove to be very different chains or forms of engagement from the chains of *différance* or any general economy.

The laughter of which Bataille and Derrida speak is, however, a different laughter indeed, although it is serious, too. For only *then*, after going through the Hegelian chain and without ignoring its internal rigor, taking it seriously, does one begin to perceive, as Bataille does with a burst of laughter, the comedy of Hegel’s all-encompassing system. This system is comic in part because it made itself blind to comedy and laughter, as it

made itself blind to blind spots, including its own, and to chance, play, poetry, ecstasy, dreams, the unconscious; or in Bataille's terms, in pursuing Hegelian mastery or lordship [Herrschaft], Hegel's system—a restricted economy—made itself blind to sovereignty, which always needs a general economy.<sup>6</sup> According to Derrida's commentary on Bataille:

Through this recourse to the *Aufhebung*, which conserves the stakes, remains in control of the play, limiting it and elaborating it by giving it form and meaning (*die Arbeit . . . bildet*), this economy of life restricts itself to conservation, to circulation and self-reproduction as the reproduction of meaning; henceforth, everything covered by the name lordship [Herrschaft] collapses into comedy. The independence of self-consciousness becomes laughable at the moment when it liberates itself by enslaving itself, when it starts to *work*, that is, when it enters into dialectics. Laughter alone exceeds dialectics and the dialectician: it bursts out only on the basis of an absolute renunciation of meaning, an absolute risking of death, what Hegel calls abstract negativity. . . . What is laughable is the *submission* to the self-evidence of meaning, to the force of this imperative: that there must be meaning, that nothing must be definitely lost in death, or further, that death should receive the signification of "abstract negativity," that a work must always be possible which, because it defers enjoyment, confers meaning, seriousness, and truth upon the "putting at stake." . . . The notion of *Aufhebung* (the speculative concept par excellence, says Hegel, the concept whose untranslatable privilege is wielded by the German language) is laughable in that it signifies the *busy*ing of a discourse losing its breath as it reappropriates all negativity for itself, as it works the "putting at stake" into an *investment*, as it *amortizes* absolute expenditure; and as it gives meaning to death, thereby simultaneously blinding itself to the baselessness of the nonmeaning from which the basis of meaning is drawn, and in which this basis of meaning is exhausted. To be indifferent to the comedy of the *Aufhebung*, as was Hegel, is to blind oneself to the experience of the sacred [in Bataille's sense], to the heedless sacrifice of presence and meaning. (*Writing and Difference*, 255–57; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 376–78)<sup>7</sup>

One thus also begins to see that *science* needs laughter, a point to which Hegel himself remained blind. "Nietzsche's principle ('It's false if it

doesn't make you laugh at least once') is at the same time associated with laughter and with *ecstatic loss of knowledge* [*la perte de connaissance extatique*],” Bataille writes in *Guilty* (68; *Le Coupable*, 90), where this necessity of laughter is a key theme, which Bataille interlaces with other general economic themes—chance, loss, unknowledge—as he also subtly interlaces Hegel and Nietzsche, throughout the book. The mastery of consciousness appears in all its power and splendor, glorious and seductive, and yet still in its slave-like poverty and misery. There appear the light and the shadow, the lightness and the heaviness, the burden of reason, its self-evidence and its complexity—the rich *chiaroscuro* of Hegel, the splendor and the misery of the philosopher.

Taking Hegel seriously has produced powerful readings of Hegel; on the French scene they comprise a modern history of its own, from Alexandre Kojève and Jean Hyppolite on, although work by Jean Wahl and Koyré must be mentioned as well.<sup>8</sup> Even so, in 1971 Derrida spoke of “elucidating the relationships to Hegel . . . [as] a difficult labor, which for the most part remains before us, and which in a certain way is interminable, at least if one wishes to execute it rigorously and minutely” (*Positions*, 43–44; *Positions*, 59). Derrida’s observation remains valid today, although since 1971 much further *reading* has been done, some of it quite good, along the lines of and in conjunction with deconstruction—itself proceeding along many lines—and elsewhere.<sup>9</sup> The analysis of Hegel remains interminable also for reasons other than those suggested by Derrida. For one thing, as in the Heraclitean river, we cannot step in the same Hegel, this great Heraclitean, twice. For that reason, elucidating our relationships to Hegel is interminable, no matter how one wishes to execute the labor, or the play, of reading, or how rigorously or unrigorously one pursues the chain of Hegel’s concepts.

One would not want to suggest unequivocally that one is prohibited from extracting propositions from their original chains, whether in Hegel or elsewhere. There is always more than one such chain, none either absolutely original or unconditionally complete. Both Bataille and Derrida extract concepts from Hegel’s chains, as does everyone else. It is always a question of balancing one’s claims and goals, or negotiating one’s constraints. At times it is more feasible or more productive to extract propositions from chains, at times to pursue more extended chains.

It is an extraordinarily difficult and possibly interminable question whether Hegel can ever be left behind. Through interaction with Hegel, through this perhaps inescapable entanglement with Hegel's shadow, the horizon of the question of meaning and of history opens itself up. Only then does an interruption of this horizon, *necessary* from a critical standpoint, become rigorously possible. One begins to see Hegel's system as a fundamental paradigm of metaphysical reduction, which also effects a closure of metaphysics in Derrida's sense—a long shadow of philosophy, its conceptuality, its politics, its history.

This shadow might appear under many other names, whether before or after Hegel, such as Heidegger or Husserl, or even Nietzsche. Heidegger, speaking of Nietzsche, insists that “no one can jump over his shadow [Keiner springt über seinen Schatten]” (*An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 199; *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Gesamtausgabe II, Abteilung 40:208). Perhaps, and yet Nietzsche might have done just that, or at least a few things that according to Heidegger cannot be done. Nietzsche “doubtless knew about shadows,” too: “Then—it was 1879—I retired from my professorship at Basel, spent the summer in St. Moritz like a shadow, and the next winter, than which not one in my life has been poorer in sunshine, in Naumburg as a shadow. This was my minimum: the *Wanderer and His Shadow* originated at this time. Doubtless, I then knew about shadows” (*Ecce Homo*, 222; KSA 6:264–65). This shadow might also be the shadow of Hegel. And yet, from this moment on it is also Zarathustra's, of “Noon; moment [*Augenblick*] of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA [Mittag; Augenblick des kürzesten Schattens; Ende des längsten Irrthums; Höhepunkt der Menschheit; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.]” (“How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error,” *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, 486; “Wie die ‘wahre Welt’ endlich zur Fabel wurde. Geschichte eines Irrthums,” *Götzen-Dämmerung*, KSA 6:81). But shadows are the longest in twilight. They also disappear along with the sun. Eternal return, eternal recurrence of Hegel? Our encounter with Hegel has been and still might be inescapable, interminable. Will it be even more so in the future? Always? Everywhere? One would have to say, in the spirit, or letter—but never *Geist*—of general economy, that Hegel one day must

be left behind, must finally die, as all gods do. The question is when, for whom, and in what sense.

One might think of the *chains* of Hegel both as those of Hegel's concepts and as those—of concepts, texts, readings, writings—that bind us to Hegel. One might, akin to the quarks in the nucleus, according to what is aptly called “the confinement model,” exist only within the confinement of Hegel, but with less binding force *within* this prison; or one can break from it. But can one then exist? There are, or at least so it appears for now, *no free* quarks. Can one survive outside this Hegelian nucleus, prison, enclosure? Or outside the closure of metaphysics and philosophy of which Derrida speaks? Are conversely Hegel or philosophy powerful enough to enact this model in the practice of *theory*?

The question becomes whether the forces of Hegel's text can be unified, in, for example, the *Phenomenology* or subsequent works, so as to lead in its textual teleology to Hegel's goal, or whether these forces and the concepts they produce will diverge and in the end rupture from *within* the fabric of Hegel's text in a way or ways that Hegel himself could not foresee. It is the question of the two readings, the two outsides by which the inside of Hegel's text may be produced.

The second—deconstructive—type of reading of Hegel offers more interesting critical and theoretical possibilities; and in fact deconstructive readings are able to produce, and have produced, sustained rigorous classical readings as well, often more rigorous than the “classical” classical readings. Indeed they must do so. For a deconstructive reading must necessarily proceed alongside, produce, or imply a classical reading against which it is set to operate. This classical reading may be produced as the author's own, even though and because deconstruction radically problematizes—but does not eliminate—the concept of the author and the authorial control of meaning of his or her own text, and, as part of its critique of philosophical reflexivity, the very concept of “own-ness.” The author's reading, like all readings, is always *produced*, but it may be very differently produced, in terms of both the claims made and the functions it performs. The author's own reading, be it conscious or unconscious, or the interplay of both, may be produced, for example, in order to explore a conflict between the classical and critical strata of a given text.<sup>10</sup> A deconstructive reading itself is, and must be, fundamentally self-conscious inso-

far as the term can be used, specifically in relation to the forces of “its own” unconscious inhibiting a text. Nor can there be an uninhabited and uninhibiting reading. As Derrida points out: “One always inhabits, all the more when one does not suspect it” (*Of Grammatology*, 24; *De la grammatologie*, 39). A deconstructive reading is more radically self-conscious, even as, and again because, along with dialectic and Hegel, it undermines all classical self-unconsciousness, or “its-own-ness” of any kind.

There will have to be more than one type of deconstructive or more generally critical or general economic reading. In the first place, there is always more than one general economy, even within a given general economy. This heterogeneous and complementary plurality itself crucially differentiates a general economy from restricted ones. The general economy is the theory of many styles and each time of a plural style; and it is *theoria* also in its Greek meaning of “spectacle”—the point unquestionably aimed at by Nietzsche’s practice. While general economy is, as we have seen, defined by Bataille against Hegel’s Science [Wissenschaft] and Marx’s political economy, its practice in Bataille and Bataille’s *writing*, using this term also in Derrida’s sense, of Nietzsche’s “gay science [fröhliche Wissenschaft]”—the joyful Dionysian-Heraclitean wisdom, artistic and philosophical. Citations from *The Gay Science* figure throughout *Inner Experience*, the paradigmatic example of Bataille’s style. Such a style, the style of general economy, can, as Derrida argues by invoking Nietzsche, only be plural [*pluriel*] (*Margins*, 135; *Marges*, 163) or, in present terms, complementary; and it may even be more radically plural, and less philosophical, than Derrida suggests.

Such a style, to use this problematic Hegelian word against Hegel, also *knows* that it can never fully control its own text, indeed that there is no economy—individual or collective, inside or outside one’s text—that can do so, in practice and in principle. The latter qualification is crucial, for Hegel knows, too, that in practice he cannot fully control his own text; the *Phenomenology* is one of the greatest records of this knowledge ever. But Hegel also appears to know, or at least to claim, that there can be, and indeed there is, an economy—the economy of Hegelian *Geist* and finally Absolute Knowledge—that can control its own and every other text and style. By virtue of and grounded in this economy, however, a certain—restricted—economy of conscious and self-conscious control, in

principle and in practice, of one's text or reading is implied, as it has been throughout the history of philosophy before and after Hegel, most specifically in Heidegger, who is the culminating achievement of this history. And this history has achieved much, if often, but not only, against itself. Thus, Hegel's concepts form the *chain* that Hegel's reasoning wants to but cannot control, either consciously or self-consciously, as "we know now," as a result of such critical or deconstructive readings. According to Derrida, who contributes a great deal to this knowledge, "we know this a priori, but only now and with a knowledge that is not a knowledge at all [nous savons *a priori*, mais seulement maintenant, et d'un savoir qui n'en est pas un" (*Of Grammatology*, 164; *De la grammatologie*, 234).<sup>11</sup> Derrida is here writing in the context of Rousseau, but the proposition is repeated almost verbatim in the context of Hegel in *Dissemination*:

. . . we *know* semantic saturation to be impossible; the signifying precipitation introduces an excess facing [*un débord*] ("that part of the lining which extends beyond the cloth," according to Littré) that cannot be mastered . . . In diverging from polysemy [a concept still within the Hegelian restricted economy, specifically and pointedly that of the *Aufhebung*], comprising both more and less than the latter, dissemination interrupts the circulation that transforms into an origin what is actually an after-effect of meaning.

But the question of meaning has barely been opened and we have not yet finished with Hegel. We *know*, said we . . . But we know something here which is no longer anything, with a knowledge whose form can no longer be recognized under this old name. (*Dissemination*, 20–21; *La Dissémination*, 27)

In both cases, Derrida undoubtedly alludes to Socrates as well. We know this only *now*, after Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, Lacan, Althusser, Deleuze, Derrida, and a few others—after the progress of knowledge, to use these no longer possible Hegelian terms. Nietzsche's critique and deconstruction of causality are felt particularly strongly in the passage just cited—"the circulation [economy] that transforms into an origin what is actually an after-effect of meaning"—and Nietzsche's writing in general is one of the greatest, arguably the greatest, moment in this progress.

Knowledge has arrived at an understanding that, in order to have any progress, Hegelian, *dialectical* progress has to collapse, at least for now. One doubts that "Hegel" will return in this sense, especially in a dialectical fashion, after being negated via the unconscious. Hegel will quite certainly continue to return otherwise; in truth, he has never quite left us, at least not yet. These relationships to Hegel, however, cannot be subsumed by means of a Hegelian, dialectical economy, for a general economy makes it impossible for these relationships to be fully or only dialectical. They can, within certain limits, have a dialectical aspect to them, whether in Hegel's or Marx's sense or yet another; and there is no general sense of dialectic or, in fact, of anything. For some, no doubt everything is still quite Hegelian, including history's relationships to Hegel himself, and for still others even pre-Hegelian, often in the name of Hegelian dialectic.

From the perspective of general economy the problem of the Hegelian conceptual chain would remain even if, and to the extent that, the so-called content could be rescued by removing Hegel's famous digressions and straightening out the logic of Hegel's argument. Such a rescuing of the signified content from the signifying surface of the text is the principle and procedure in which Hegel, or philosophy in general, believes and on which they depend, but which can never be performed without leaving a signifying textual remainder. It is, in many ways, the place where deconstruction begins. As Derrida warns in *Of Grammatology* (160) and elsewhere, however, one should be aware of the residual functioning of the operation itself in all deconstruction, even in the course of exposing this operation in another text. Under a Heisenbergian or post-Heisenbergian microscope of general economy, Hegel or Hegel's text is unable to offer a sustainable logic leading to full consciousness and knowledge—Absolute Knowledge. Hegel's inconsistencies cannot be removed; to maintain an argument of that type, to rescue Hegel's logic, would be extremely difficult and, I think, impossible for now and most probably unlikely in the future as well.

To be sure, "as we know now," there is no full, complete logic even in the text of mathematics, let alone philosophy or the critique of philosophy. This critique may at times be pursued in nonphilosophical modes, as in Nietzsche and Bataille, although it also works at transforming philosophy from within.<sup>12</sup> The general problem of the undecidability of theoretic-



cal propositions is not at issue at the moment, except of course insofar as one must use it against Hegel's and philosophy's decidable logic. At issue is a confrontation of the two logics, the logical logic of philosophy and the logic of undecidability, together with an exploration of their relative limits. The term 'undecidable' is used here in Derrida's sense, by analogy with Gödel. But within the fields at issue, this usage itself is no less, indeed it is more rigorous than the classical logic of philosophy, formal or transcendental.<sup>13</sup>

Nor, conversely, can one say that it is not logic that *decides* an argument such as this. It would be nice to be able to say that by liberating oneself from Hegel or philosophy, a theoretical or antitheoretical laborer stood to lose nothing except the chains of logic. Such is not the case, however. Many things, and many of them undecidable, might decide this or other cases. One cannot fully, absolutely reduce logic, however, even, and particularly, given the complexity of its determination and indeterminability.

It is this impossibility of the full reduction of logic that makes the nomination 'logic' so complex and problematic, so indeterminate, so undecidable, a kind of theoretical schizophrenia, which I shall examine in Chapter 6.<sup>14</sup> This complexity, indeterminacy, and undecidability make an absolute removal of logic impossible, even as they make it impossible for philosophy to maintain a rigorous distinction between formal and transcendental logic, or the logic of mathematics and the logic of philosophy, or to maintain the centrality of any logic. It might even be easier to remove most, if not all, the chains of transcendental, such as dialectical, logic rather than just those of formal or mathematical logic. The *necessary* excess of formal or mathematical logic must be configured otherwise, demanding the complementary logic and anti-logic of complementarity between logic and many a nonlogic. General economy does not suspend rigor; on the contrary, it demands and enables even, as Bataille would have it, the utmost scientific rigor along with the anti-rigor of nonscientific play.

It may be possible to sustain Hegel's logic, or some of it, by assuming first the possibility of full consciousness, full knowledge, full presence. That is, one can apply to Hegel's text what Derrida calls the logic of supplement as the logic of positing a full presence first, axiomatically as it were, or implicitly, blindly. The latter is what Derrida more customarily refers to by "the strange structure of the supplement [la structure étrange

du supplément]” (*Speech and Phenomena*, 89; *La Voix and le phénomène*, 99). Hegel employs this strategy often, and in both ways, combining “axioms” and “blindness” or “blindness and insight.” Feuerbach was perhaps the first to observe, within classical limits, this supplementarity of Hegel’s logic. According to Derrida’s important footnote,

. . . Feuerbach had already examined in terms of *writing* the question of the Hegelian *presupposition* and of the textual residue . . . “the exposition was supposed to *presuppose nothing*, to leave no residue inside us, to empty us and drain us out completely . . .” Since that cannot be effected, Feuerbach in his turn, as if expecting the favor to be returned, accuses Hegel of “speculative empiricism” and of formalism, then even of “pretense” and of “game playing.” What is of interest here, beyond each of these terms, is the necessity of the exchange and of the opposition. “But precisely for this reason with Hegel also—aside from the wonderfully scientific rigor of his development—the proof of the absolute has in essence and in *principle* only a *formal* significance. Hegelian philosophy presents a contradiction between truth and scientific spirit, between the essential and the formal, between *thought* and *writing*. *Formally*, the absolute idea is certainly not presupposed, but in essence it is.” (*Dissemination*, 29 n. 28; *La Dissémination*, 35–36 n. 16)

On the one hand, the logic of the supplement allows Derrida to open the possibility of “reading the Hegelian text as an immense game of writing [lire le *texte* hegelien comme un immense jeu d’écriture], a powerful and thus imperturbable simulacrum, yielding the undecidable signs of its pretence only in the sub-text, the floating fable of its prefaces and its footnotes? Hegel in person, after all, could have let himself get caught up in this” (*Dissemination*, 30 n. 28; *La Dissémination*, 36 n. 16). This game cannot be reduced to “pretence” and “game-playing” in any naive sense, of course, although naive game-playing is far from being always absent, either. This game also demands an economy, necessarily general, of writing and textuality, whereby such things as “pretence” and “game-playing” become refigured as well. Neither Hegel nor Feuerbach wanted or could offer such an economy, except, of course, by their textual practice—necessarily, like everyone else, even if in more interesting ways than most others. From the perspective of *writing* in Derrida’s sense and

in its general economy, any text is “an immense game of writing,” albeit played by different players.

*On the other hand*, and as if to prove this latter point, Derrida in the same gesture deconstructs Feuerbach: “By inversion and chiasmus from here on, Feuerbach cuts across Hegel and summons him back, unseasonably, to the gravity of philosophy and history: ‘The philosopher must bring into the *text* of philosophy that which Hegel relegates to footnotes: that part of man which does *not* philosophize, which is *against* philosophy and *resists* abstract thought’” (*Dissemination*, 30 n. 28; *La Dissémination*, 36 n. 16).

This latter necessity, demanded or desired at one level or another, defines a crucial difference between a precritical or metaphysical text, such as Hegel’s or Feuerbach’s, and a critical text such as Nietzsche’s, Bataille’s, or Derrida’s. The “footnotes,” the exteriors and margins of philosophy, of which Feuerbach speaks, and particularly Hegel’s footnotes, cannot be brought into the *text* of philosophy unless the latter is made a *text* in Derrida’s sense. Such exteriors and margins can be philosophized, can be and have been considered philosophically, including as absolute exteriors and margins, absolute others, of philosophy, through which concepts philosophy often hopes and claims to master its exteriors and margins. It is in fact not altogether correct to say, as Feuerbach does, that Hegel does not consider them in the “main text.” But they cannot, finally, *belong* or be *proper* to philosophy,<sup>15</sup> as Hegel in fact understood; and they cannot be “brought in” in the way Feuerbach wants, which is Derrida’s double deconstructive point here. They require a very different sense of text and of human beings, and they result in a very different *text*, even if within the closure of philosophy or having a common closure or closures with it. Derrida plays this game of margins and footnotes, purposely thematizing them in “*Hors-Livre*,” including in the very footnote at issue. But this is only a small part, a child’s play really, of the great game of *writing*.

In “the immense play of his writing,” which Hegel does not view as the play-game [jeu] of writing, he does see that one needs at least as much presence and infinity as *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge, in order to make dialectic and dialectical history, grounded in the concept of presence, possible at any level. One needs, that is, an infinite excess of presence to

sustain any presence. They are necessary, for example, in order to make human history dialectical. That is a great insight, one of Hegel's greatest insights. As Marx's case suggests, it might be even more difficult, even impossible, to maintain dialectic without the ideal Subject-*Geist* and Absolute Knowledge. Great as Hegel's own awareness of these problems may be, however, it is not sufficient. Nor is it ever a simple blindness. While necessary for Hegel, it is, from the perspective of general economy, a fundamental theoretical deficiency.

Much Hegel is needed still, both against Hegel and for many other projects. For one thing, much logic is indispensable, even though much of it must be suspended. A general economy, whether of interpretation, criticism, theory, or history, must be in the possession of both—the highest consciousness of theory and the highest unconscious of . . . what? That might remain undetermined; it certainly cannot be determined once and for all. A kind of “play,” let us say, following Nietzsche. In this play, both consciousness and the unconscious must often play together, but must at times be separated as well. They are complementary. Bataille conceives of the general economy as rigorously theoretical, scientific—a science of the excess, and *in* the excess, of the dialectical consciousness, alongside the general economic, irreducible loss in consciousness, representation, and meaning. “Against Hegel,” one needs both “play against logic” and “logic against logic.”

Hegel's central concepts do remain fundamentally problematic; often the more fundamentally problematic they are, the more fundamental they are in his work. While often uncritically dismissed, Hegel's central concepts control and overshadow much of modern theoretical and historical discourse. That shadow extends to the most empirical, most scientific, most objective, and even most materialist discourse, whether it is pursued in the name of philosophy or against philosophy. It is imperative to expose the problematic nature of these concepts and to analyze the conditions responsible for the emergence of the Hegelian vision of History and, and as, Consciousness. A radical critique of Hegel is at issue. One must remain vigilant, however, as Hegel himself continued to be in the meticulous specificity of his labor. A reading, a history, or a theory must achieve a consciousness, if such is the term, that it cannot be fully conscious and self-conscious, so as to be able to calculate and control all its moves, even if it must also have the power of unconscious play.

## Closures and Question Marks

Hegel's text constrains our historical interpretations and our concepts of history, thus making "Hegel" the name of the historical closure of historicism, and possibly the name of the closure of metaphysics or philosophy itself. Shall one say further with Derrida, "the metaphysical closure"? Can one "think" closure as different from the metaphysical and otherwise than metaphysically? A relation of a given, and specifically his own, discourse to philosophy and its closure is the most crucial relation, indeed complementarity, in Derrida's text, the text that explores and is written, also in Derrida's sense of *writing*, on the margins of philosophy.

The closure [clôture] of metaphysics in Derrida designates our dependence on the language and concepts developed throughout the history of philosophy, but operative elsewhere as well. This dependence in fact extends far beyond the text and institution of philosophy, compelling one, necessarily within certain limits, to speak of the *closure* of metaphysics or philosophy or to engage deconstruction in other fields, such as linguistics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, or literary theory.

This dependence and, thus, this closure is, according to Derrida, fundamental and irreducible, even, and in particular, in the very practice of deconstruction. The latter must not only critically engage metaphysics and philosophy, which is obviously necessary if one wants to deconstruct them, but must, according to Derrida, borrow from the resources of and depend on what it deconstructs. Derrida's deconstruction may in fact be seen as the investigation of the closure so conceived.

Such an investigation may indeed be an interminable project, as Derrida suggests on many occasions, whether, as we have seen, specifically in relation to the reading of Hegel or in general. On this grounds, from *Of Grammatology* on, "a distinction is proposed between *closure* [la clôture] and *end* [la fin]. What is held within the de-limited closure [la clôture délimitée] may continue indefinitely" (*Positions*, 13; *Positions*, 23; translation modified). Thus, although the term 'closure' would naturally suggest conclusion, end, or termination, and these connotations must be kept in mind, the closure of metaphysics as understood by Derrida implies instead, or rather simultaneously, a certain interminability—a certain inability to close—on the model of Freud's interminable analysis, the model that plays a crucial role in Derrida.

The closure of metaphysics may be related to, but may also need to be differentiated from, a broader interpretive closure or economy of closures, specifically the closure of presence itself. Presence is a notion and rubric of central significance for Derrida and is used by him with great effectiveness. Metaphysics itself, as Derrida argues, is always—wherever it operates, inside or outside philosophy—the metaphysics of presence, even if that of difference and becoming. As the metaphysics of presence, philosophy is often, certainly in Hegel and Heidegger, the metaphysics of difference and exteriority; but it is such *as* the metaphysics of presence and the continuum—spatial, temporal, or other—in short a restricted economy. The closure of difference, exteriority, or transformation is no less at issue, however, particularly in relation to the question of history and temporality, even though, as both Heidegger and, still more critically, Derrida demonstrate, both temporality and historicity have been grounded in the notion of presence or the continuum throughout their history.<sup>16</sup> More generally, difference, exteriority, transformability, discontinuity—or of course continuity—and other major philosophical rubrics of that type may overlap with various configurations assembled under the rubric of presence. It would therefore be more effective in turn to complementarize such closures and constraints rather than to summarize them under any given rubric. One can suggest, however, a more general and stable, if complementarized, *interpretive* closure as opposed to a more differentiated or disseminated and more transformable *theoretical* closure.

While the question of the closure of metaphysics or, more generally, of theory is in strict terms not *Hegel's* question, it could come close enough to Hegel to be a *Hegelian* question. If hardly the first to discover the anxiety of metaphysics, Hegel was at least the first to articulate it: “[M]etaphysics is the word before which, however abstract and *near to thinking* it be, most of us flee from as smitten with plague [Denn Metaphysik ist das Wort, wie Abstrakt und beinahe auch Denken das Wort ist, vor dem jeder, mehr oder minder, wie vor einem mit der Pest Behafteten davon läuft]” (emphasis added).<sup>17</sup> In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida sums up this Hegelian economy: “Hegel was already caught up in this game. . . . He undoubtedly *summed up* the entire philosophy of the logos. He determined ontology as absolute logic; he assembled all the delimitations of being as presence” (*Of Grammatology*, 24; *De la grammatologie*, 39; translation modified).<sup>18</sup>

Thus it is possible to speak of a post-Hegelian closure, the *closure* of philosophy, replacing Hegel's conception of philosophy and its primary role in the history of (self-)consciousness and knowledge. I call this closure post-Hegelian not because it was not operative before Hegel—quite the contrary: the power of this closure throughout the history of philosophy and indeed throughout history is one of Derrida's main points. I do so because, as Derrida's formulation suggests, without realizing it and in spite of himself, Hegel inscribed the functioning of the *closure* of philosophy, rather than the functioning of philosophy itself. What is claimed by Hegel for philosophy can in fact be claimed only for the closure of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. The understanding that this economy is the economy of a certain closure—and that Hegel in fact inscribes this closure—is a profound insight. This replacement or displacement of philosophy, that conceives of and attempts to develop itself as the fundamental ground of all knowledge, toward the closure of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence is one of Derrida's major contributions, perhaps his greatest contribution, to our understanding of the functioning of the philosophical discourse in our culture.

It is important that by means of this closure Derrida inscribes a *différance*—and thus, as we have seen, at a certain point a radical difference from, and not only repetition of or proximity to, Hegel. While, as I shall suggest, Derrida's economy of the closure of metaphysics may be seen as, in a certain sense, Hegelian, it is not a repetition of Hegel, who does not see this closure as closure, in spite, or rather because, of all his philosophical vigilance. *Glas* brilliantly mirrors and amplifies this transformation from philosophy to the closure and deconstruction of philosophy, simultaneously introducing more radical indeterminacy and undecidability into the field, as if placing the text of philosophy under a kind of Heisenbergian microscope, but thus also showing the overwhelming significance Hegel bears for Derrida.

The pervasive influence of Heidegger in Derrida, playing an arguably even greater role in his later texts, complicates the genealogy of all Derridean concepts, including and perhaps particularly that of closure;<sup>19</sup> and one in fact can substitute Heidegger for Hegel in most of the propositions just advanced. Heidegger cites Hegel's statement on metaphysics as an epigraph to the Postscript to the influential "What is Metaphysics?" (*Existence and Being*, 349). As Heidegger's question, the latter opens up

another immense question, that of the difference, or *différance*, and possibly complementarity, between Heidegger's end and the de(con)struction [Destruction] of metaphysics and Derrida's general economic deconstruction and the closure of metaphysics. This *différance* has a complex economy of stratifications, trajectories of interaction, and sedimentation and desedimentation; but in spite of and because of this complexity, it, too, still can and must be seen as *différance*, the play of differences, proximities, and interactions.

In and between Heidegger and Derrida, this *différance*, and all the questions just posed, will depend on the question of reading Nietzsche and on how one relates Nietzsche's text to the text and history of philosophy; and Derrida's reading of Nietzsche connotes distance from rather than proximity to Heidegger, even when this proximity becomes closer, as in Derrida's later writings.

In more general terms, however, what would be the relation of a general economic text to the *text* of philosophy and its margins, or what would be the structure of their complementarity? A necessary relation? A unique relation? While the metaphysics of presence or the field of restricted economy is unified to a degree, of course, it may not be seen as fully unified and most certainly not as unified as philosophy's own disciplinary self-concept would have it. But it is sufficiently unified to join the historico-theoretical forces of its many contingents.<sup>20</sup> What—and in the name of what—would relate and differentiate different margins and exteriors of philosophy, or different general economies, such as Nietzsche's, Bataille's, and Derrida's, against the forces of philosophy and restricted economies elsewhere? Such differences may engage margins that may or may not be defined as the margins of philosophy, or margins of anything, for that matter; they may or may not desire to define themselves in this way.

Perhaps we are even no longer quite, or quite in the same way, "caught within the metaphysical closure" that Derrida continuously invokes:

If I provisionally authorize myself to treat this historical structure by fixing my attention on philosophical or literary texts, it is not for the sake of identifying in them the origin, cause, or equilibrium of the structure. But as I also do not think that these texts are the simple *effects* of structure, in any sense of the word; as I think that *all concepts hitherto*



*proposed in order to think the articulation of a discourse and of an historical totality are caught within the metaphysical closure that I question here*, as we do not know of any other concepts and cannot produce any others, and indeed shall not produce so long as this closure limits our discourse; as the primordial and indispensable phase, in fact and in principle, of the development of this problematic, consists in questioning the internal structure of these [metaphysical] texts as symptoms; as that is the only condition for determining these symptoms *themselves* in the totality of their metaphysical appurtenance; I draw my argument from them in order to isolate Rousseau, and, in Rousseauism, the theory of writing. (*Of Grammatology*, 99; *De la grammatologie*, 148)

The metaphysical closure that Derrida describes here refers primarily to the closure of philosophy as a certain field of texts, which can be sufficiently, but never absolutely, delimited, in part by the rubric of presence. A more general interpretive closure or closures—such as the closure of presence or the closure of difference—may, however, be suggested at this juncture, although, while he does invoke the closure of presence throughout his discourse, Derrida himself does not stratify the economy of closure by differentiating interpretive from theoretical closure. Metaphysics, especially as the metaphysics of presence, does operate outside the institutions and texts of philosophy, of course, extending its closure, and enabling and necessitating deconstruction across a very large spectrum of texts in the human and social sciences, such as linguistics, literature, literary criticism and theory, history, and even the natural and exact sciences. Conversely, such complementary exterior fields can be used to deconstruct philosophy, or each other.

Closure is a brilliant concept and it is a theoretical tool used with great effectiveness by Derrida. One can also argue, however, that there can be no untransformed or undifferentiated configuration of closure. It cannot be *the* closure. There can be no totality of closure, particularly of a given theoretical closure, such as the closure of metaphysics, just as there can never be *the* historical totality, an absolute historical totality. Derrida's usage of the indefinite article—“*an* historical totality”—in the passage just cited is mandatory. It may be, however, that a certain—and here one may say Hegelian—globalization of the closure of metaphysics—“*ALL*

*concepts hitherto proposed . . .*”—could be detected in Derrida.<sup>21</sup> And it may not be enough to insist, as Derrida does elsewhere, on the heterogeneity of closure itself or on the heterogeneity of a given field, here specifically metaphysics and philosophy. Thus as he writes in “The *Retrait* of Metaphor”:

. . . for me it was not a question of taking ‘metaphysics’ (“la” *métaphysique*) as the homogeneous unity of an ensemble. I have never believed in the existence or in the consistency of something like metaphysics *itself* (*la métaphysique*). . . . Keeping in account such and such a demonstrative sentence or such a contextual constraint, if I happened to say ‘metaphysics’ or ‘the’ closure of ‘metaphysics’ (an expression which is the target of [Paul Ricoeur’s] *Life Metaphor*), very often, elsewhere, but also in “White Mythology,” I have put forward the proposition according to which there would never be ‘metaphysics,’ ‘closure’ not being here a circular limit bordering a homogeneous field but a more twisted structure which today, according to another figure, I would be tempted to call: ‘invaginated’. Representation of a linear and circular closure surrounding a homogeneous space is, precisely, the theme of my greatest emphasis, an auto-representation of philosophy in its onto-encyclopedic logic. (“The *Retrait* of Metaphor,” 14; “Le *Retrait* de la *métaphore*,” 72)

Crucial qualification as it is, and inscribing a very complex—twisted—topology of the complementary interaction between philosophy and its exterior, the passage in fact suggests an all the more pervasive and irreducible role for the closure of philosophy in this heterogeneous field.

Derrida’s theoretical *positions* are always complex, and are rarely unequivocal. Derrida’s proximities, however infinitesimal, even to the best metaphysics, such as Hegel or Heidegger, are always accompanied by an often radical difference. Such is, we recall, Derrida’s own claim concerning his enterprise; and the execution amply justifies and confirms it. In the style of psychoanalysis and by analogy with Freud’s concept of interminable analysis, in Derrida’s *case* the closure of metaphysics leads to the interminable “questioning [of] the internal structure of [the texts of philosophy as] these symptoms.” Like all neuroses, philosophy itself must remain incurable, even though some of its symptoms might be treated and controlled.

One cannot underestimate the value and significance of this aspect of Derrida's project; for, beyond extraordinary readings emerging as a result, the economy at issue does play a crucial role within indeed very broad historico-theoretical limits. As the analysis in the preceding chapter suggests, however, this economy of simultaneous proximity and difference of that type, concomitant with the economy of closure in Derrida, may need to be nuanced by means of more diverse complementarities.

By contrast, the interpretive closure described earlier, the closure of presence, difference, exteriority, and so forth, may indeed be a more stable economy, although it must still be configured complementarily. The operation and relative or even universal—relatively universal—stability of interpretive closures and specifically the closure of presence, extensively explored by Derrida, would not contradict, quite the contrary, the claims just made concerning the economy of the closure of metaphysics or philosophy, understood as the historico-theoretical or textual-institutional ensemble. In fact this stability of interpretive closures would demand rather than suspend a radical heterogeneity of theoretical closures. For what would compel one necessarily to see such interpretive closures or, equally importantly, the understanding of their functioning as contained by the closure of philosophy—its languages, its texts, its institutions, its discipline, in either sense of the word 'discipline'?

We cannot produce new concepts "as long as this closure limits our discourse," as Derrida says. We might, however, have to nuance this claim by maintaining a plurality and heterogeneity of closures—or of course within a given closure, which Derrida in fact does—and by possibly locating the areas of discourse where the notion—*any* notion of closure—cannot apply. Besides, new concepts or anti-concepts—or, as *différance*, neither terms nor concepts—are still produced in Derrida and elsewhere. The main question, however, is whether and to what extent the theoretical closure defined by Derrida as the closure of metaphysics and philosophy still limits our discourse, and whether it is—and has ever been—one closure or the same, untransformed closure, which closure, in addition, must be defined as the closure of philosophy, powerful and far-reaching as this closure indeed appears to be. The question, therefore, is also whether, crucial and effective as this project has been in Derrida and elsewhere, the project of the *interminable* questioning of the *internal*

structure of certain philosophical symptoms is an irreducible project or an irreducible counterpart of any effective theoretical project.

The concepts produced within the history of philosophy do continue to constrain our discourse in various fields, where we need the concept of history or the concepts of presence, difference, exteriority, language, and so forth. The list is indeed long, although perhaps, finally, neither interminable nor fully governed by philosophy. The power and effectiveness of the concepts produced within the history of philosophy and the extension of their functioning to other fields lead Derrida to the idea of the closure of philosophy. The degree and the limits of this closure and its very structure and economy may, however, need to be questioned further than Derrida does. In particular, if there can be no untransformed closure, what does it take to transgress such a closure or to transform a *closure* at a given moment, or to transform it radically?

Derrida never speaks either of the transformation of closure or of a stratification—or *dissemination*—of closure; and the absence of propositions to that effect may imply that the functioning of Derrida's *dissemination*, *différance*, *writing*, and other operators of radical heterogeneity would remain controlled by the economy of the closure of metaphysics. Derrida's position on and around this issue thus appears to be closer to, although again also different from, both Hegel and Heidegger than to Nietzsche, who is a more transgressive thinker in this and other respects.<sup>22</sup>

One can in fact establish a kind of Hegel-Husserl-Heidegger-Derrida axis, whereby Derrida's position of proximity is established via the very economy of the closure of philosophy. This axis can be juxtaposed to the Nietzsche-Freud-Bataille-Derrida axis, defined by the unconscious and general economy, along which a more complex configuration and stratification of closure must be established.<sup>23</sup> Derrida's position or *positions* of operating simultaneously along both of these axes, as well as several others that may be formed, particularly in relation to primarily literary figures, are not contradictory. This operation logically corresponds to his position of simultaneously infinitesimal proximity to and radical difference from a given field, most particularly philosophy, or a given author, such as Hegel or Heidegger. In addition, one cannot unequivocally position Nietzsche or Freud, for example, outside the Hegelian axis; and different axes can be formed in this complex landscape. One must also be

careful not to homogenize any of these authors' texts: one would need rather to vary and multiply the landscape of proximities, distances, and complementarities between them even further. At the same time, one cannot ignore intervals of relative stability; and while such axes are relatively arbitrary and shifting, they do reflect the differences, at times crucial, of theories, ideologies, and positions.

The main question would still be whether this closure of—or this continuous re-enclosure into—philosophy is unavoidable. Against Derrida perhaps and closer to Nietzsche, or within the closure of Nietzsche, I would be compelled to answer in the negative and suggest that one needs a more diverse stratification and a more radical economy of transformations of closure than ever suggested by Derrida. I would not be able to fully develop such an argument here; and it may well be more fitting to offer this proposition as a question—perhaps the most radical question opened by Derrida's text.

Hegel—the name of history, the name of (self-)consciousness, the name of the closure of metaphysics, the name of all these names—is, then, according to Derrida, “the name of a problem [le nom d'un problème]” (*Of Grammatology*, 99; *De la grammatologie*, 148). Derrida's formulation and approach—the “treatment,” although not necessarily a cure, of “problem cases”—owes a great deal to Freud and psychoanalysis. As Derrida points out, however, this treatment should not be confused with psychoanalytic readings (*Of Grammatology*, 160; *De la grammatologie*, 228). Nietzsche is a major precursor as well, with many cases and case studies, or problem studies, from *The Birth of Tragedy* on: “the case of Socrates” and “the problem of Socrates,” “the case of Wagner,” and “the problem of the philosopher.” These “reformulations” or remetaphorizations were to have momentous implications for the methods or the styles of theory and analysis. Clearly not only proper names can be so engaged. As Derrida suggests in *The Truth in Painting*: “For the moment I am borrowing from them [the theorists of speech acts] only some convenient approximations, which are really only the names of problems, without knowing if there really are any such things as pure ‘constatives’ and ‘performatives’” (*The Truth in Painting*, 3; *La Vérité en peinture*, 7). Both “history” and “the unconscious” are certainly the names of problems. It does not follow that all such terms are equally problematic or that *some* of them are dispensable. We have to live with some of these names,

although perhaps, contrary to the implications of the psychoanalytic metaphor, not with the same problems. Some of them may not even be problems any longer.

Derrida's formulation in *Of Grammatology* comes immediately after declaring "'Hegelianism' . . . the finest scar [la plus belle cicatrice]" of a "battle [guerre]" against writing. In *The Truth of Painting*, Derrida again "name[s] the necessity of deconstruction" with "[the] proper name Hegel." "I do no more than name," Derrida says, more exactly. "No more." But also no less. For at issue, by way of Victor Cousin, is Hegel's overpowering presence, Hegel's role—"a determinant role"—and one might say, a performance, on the French scene and "in the *construction* of the French University and its philosophical institution" (*The Truth in Painting*, 19; *La Vérité en peinture*, 23; emphasis added). At stake is a deconstruction of all these theoretico-political structures. These are very large stakes: "What is at stake here [in the question of *différance* and Hegel's dialectic] is enormous [L'enjeu est ici énorme]" (*Positions*, 42; *Positions*, 55).

Hegel, then, appears as the name and the problem of an enormous shadow looming over our theoretical and historical discourse, of the philosophy of history, or history of philosophy, as these transpositions become—in the shadow of Hegel—unavoidable. "Close to us and since Hegel, in his mighty shadow [Prés de nous et depuis Hegel, dans son ombre immense]" is Derrida's demarcation of the modern philosophical enterprise, when he speaks in his analysis of Levinas (a "Jew"), of these "two Greeks" Husserl and Heidegger (*Writing and Difference*, 81; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 120). "Upon Derrida" himself, as Spivak points out, "Hegel's shadow is diffuse and gigantic" (Translator's Preface, *Of Grammatology*, liv). "In his mighty shadow"—that is perhaps also a sun, "a sun, a shadow of a magnitude," as Keats said ("On Seeing the Elgin Marbles," 14)—as that of the wings of an enormous eagle—who can gaze at the sun—invoked at the opening of Derrida's *Glas* and suggested by the French pronunciation of the name "Hegel"—"*aigle*"—"eagle":

Who, him? [Qui, lui?]

His name is so strange. From the eagle it draws imperial or historic power. Those who still pronounce his name like the French (there are

some) are ludicrous only up to a certain point: the restitution (semantically infallible for those who have read him a little—but only a little) of magisterial coldness and imperturbable seriousness, the eagle caught in ice and frost, glass and gel.

Let the emblanched philosopher be so congealed [Soit ainsi figé le philosophe emblémi].” (*Glas*, 1a; *Glas* 1:1 left column)<sup>24</sup>

“Who, him?” “Eagle,” a great symbol of many an empire throughout history. State and history are themselves united by philosophy and the philosopher. “Eagle,” or perhaps Prometheus bound, chained, in the ice and frost of the Caucasus in Aeschylus’s tragedy, primordial and empty, as “the empty abyss of the Absolute [*der leere Abgrund des Absoluten*]” (*Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, 489; *Werke* 3:587). Hegel might appear as any figure or feature of this landscape, for example, as we have seen, as the rock to which we are chained, or as the chains themselves, the heavy burden of his self-evidence. “Heavy as frost, and deep *almost* as life!”—as Wordsworth said (*Intimations of Immortality*, l. 128, emphasis added). Wordsworth, coincidentally, was born in the same year, 1770, as Hegel, and also Beethoven, and was writing the Great Ode at about the same time that Hegel, almost believing himself going mad, was writing the *Phenomenology*. Both works were published in the same year, 1807<sup>25</sup>—the “years that bring the philosophic mind” (l. 185). “Heavy as frost and deep almost as life”—but only “almost.” “‘Heavy,’ it will be even more so in the future.” But then it is also a great, boundless landscape of boundless pleasure of the immense I—*Ich*—of the ego and the id of *Geist*, or of Hegel, as if saying, with Shelley, “. . . I love all waste / And solitary places; where we taste / The pleasure of believing what we see / Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be . . .” (*Julian and Maddalo*, 14–17).

Derrida repeats this question—“Who, he?”—parenthetically in *The Post Card* (61), as part of this complex inscription of the identity of the writer of Socrates-Plato’s text, and no doubt alluding to the opening of *Glas* and to the epigraph from Nietzsche which opens the first chapter of *Of Grammatology*, “The End of the Book and the Beginning of Writing”: “Socrates, he who does not write?” “Socrates, he who does not write”; Hegel, he who does.

“Who, him?” And who are “we,” over whom this mighty shadow—this light of reason and of the *philosophic* mind—is spread? “Who are

we?" is also Derrida's question, concluding the essay devoted in part to Hegel and entitled appropriately, "The Ends of Man" (*Margins*). The question in effect is also asked by the opening of *Glas* that precedes "Who, him?" just cited:

what, after all, of the remain(s), today, for *us, here, now*, of a Hegel?

For *us, here, now*: from now on that is what one will not have been able to think without him.

For *us, here, now*: these words are citations, already, always, we will have learned that from him." (*Glas*, 1a; *Glas* 1:1, left column; emphasis added)<sup>26</sup>

Before Derrida, however, it was Nietzsche's question asked in the section of *The Gay Science* entitled, no less appropriately, "Our Question Mark": "But you do not understand this? Indeed, people will have trouble understanding us. We are looking for words; perhaps we are also looking for ears. Who are we anyway?" (*The Gay Science*, 285; KSA 3:579). Nietzsche actually gives an answer. Or rather in suggesting who "we" are or might be, he poses, in the context of and against his customary triad, almost a trinity—philosophy, Christianity, nihilism—a qualitatively new kind of question. To cite only his extraordinary conclusion:

The whole pose of "man *against* the world," of man as a "world-negating" principle, of man as the measure of the value of things, as judge of the world who in the end places existence itself upon his scale and finds it wanting—the monstrous insipidity of this pose has finally come home to us and we are sick of it. We laugh as soon as we encounter the juxtaposition of "man *and* world," separated by the sublime presumption of the little word "and." But look, when we laugh like that, have we not simply carried the contempt for man one step further? And thus also pessimism, the contempt for that existence which is knowable by *us*? Have we not exposed ourselves to the suspicion of an opposition—an opposition between the world in which we were at home up to now with our reverences that perhaps made it possible for us to *endure* life, and another world *that consists of us*—an inexorable, fundamental, and deepest suspicion about ourselves that is more and more gaining worse and worse control of us Europeans and that could easily confront coming generations with the terrifying Either/Or: "Either abolish your reverences or—*yourself*!" The latter would be nihil-



ism; but would not the former also be—nihilism?—This is *our* question mark. (*The Gay Science*, 286–87; KSA 3:580–81)

*The Birth of Tragedy*—“an impossible book [ein unmögliches Buch]” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 18; KSA 1:13)—is already a scene of this question—Who are we? It is its Aeschylean landscape, tragic and philosophical or “on the eve and aftermath of [tragedy]” and “philosophy” [“à la veille et au-delà philosophie”] (*Margins*, 7; *Marges*, 7). There that great “yet unattempted” question, “What is Dionysian?” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 20; KSA 1:15) is asked “in the context of art [{hingestellt} auf den Boden der *Kunst*]”—perhaps an impossible context.

The question itself, however, is Nietzsche’s answer to or way of posing “the problem of science itself [das Problem der Wissenschaft selbst]” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 18; KSA 1:13), including, therefore, the science of man—“human science.” It becomes for Nietzsche the problem of morality (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 22–24; KSA 1:17–19). It goes far beyond that, however, if there is a “beyond” to the question and the question mark of morality in Nietzsche, particularly since it becomes related in the “Freudian” Nietzsche to the question of memory and the unconscious. “What I then got hold of, something frightful and dangerous, a problem with horns but not necessarily a bull, in any case a *new* problem—today I should say that it was *the problem of science itself*, science considered for the first time as problematic, as questionable” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 18; KSA 1:13)—a kind of monster, a minotaur whom one must confront in a labyrinth. “Today” would still hold, I think, including in respect to the problem and “the case of Socrates”: “the influence of Socrates, down to the present moment and even into all future time, has spread over posterity like a shadow that keeps growing in the evening sun . . .” (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 93; KSA 1:13). That must be said of Hegel’s shadow, too; and Nietzsche could very well have had Hegel in mind, consciously or unconsciously, as his comment in *Ecce Homo* suggests (170).

Nietzsche appears, perhaps inevitably, in the *end* of “The Ends of Man,” in the concluding section “Reading Us” (emphasis added). “*Reading us*”—that is to say, “*writing us*,” in Derrida’s sense, thus making “man” a kind of *writing*, if a single name were possible under the conditions of *writing* and *différance*. Given that *différance* is neither a word nor a concept, “man,” once so written, can no longer be defined in relation to

*Dasein* and Being as in Heidegger,<sup>27</sup> or to *Geist* and consciousness as in Hegel, or as the existential human being of existentialism, or as the “human” as defined by “human sciences.”<sup>28</sup> “Man” may not even be quite an “animal,” except perhaps in a Nietzschean sense used against the metaphysical sense of the thinking, speaking, reasoning, rational, feeling, or human animal. All these concepts are designed, as a part of the general program of philosophy and humanism alike, to make man different from other animals; and this distinction itself cannot be sustained in its classical form. Although *différance* seems a good name, as neither a word nor a concept, it cannot be a name. In fact, it cannot *be*, even, and particularly, in Heidegger’s sense of Being. At the very least, it cannot be *the* name, a unique or final name.

Nietzsche often appears in Derrida in the context of Heidegger, who is in turn a major subject and proper name of “The Ends of Man,” along with Hegel and the names of the French intellectual and political or geopolitical scene—landscape, “terrain,” theater—in 1968. This scene, thus, is also the scene of reading, as Derrida’s title “Reading Us” intimates—reading “us” and reading, or not reading, Hegel, via Marx or otherwise, the scene of active involvement with Hegel’s text in Kojève, Bataille, Hyppolite, Lacan, and many others, readers and nonreaders, or antireaders. But it is, thus, also, interactively, the scene of reading of Nietzsche and Heidegger, who, of course, is also a major reader of Nietzsche, and of Hegel. That abundance of texts and readers need not diminish the originality, often profound, of the ideas and conceptions introduced by different French—or German or Anglo-American or still other—figures in this landscape. It is, however, possible, or perhaps necessary to say, that the transformations, revolutions even, produced by this intellectual history were also the effects of a re-reading of Nietzsche, against Hegel and Heidegger, and Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche. This rereading may in fact be traced to Bataille, who derived, via Nietzsche, many radical, and radically Nietzschean, consequences of whatever he would read; but it has been particularly decisive in shaping the poststructuralist scene in France.<sup>29</sup>

Derrida’s context in “The Ends of Man” is also that of style, and Nietzsche *enters* in a different, *plural* style of his own performance, his play and his *writing*: “I am purposely speaking in terms of a dominant style: because there are also breaks and changes of terrain in texts of the

Heideggerian type; because the 'change of terrain' is far from upsetting the entire French landscape to which I am referring; because what we need, perhaps, as Nietzsche said, is a change of 'style'; and if there is style, Nietzsche reminded us, it must be *plural*" (*Margins*, 135; *Marges*, 163).<sup>30</sup> Derrida concludes his essay on a Nietzschean note and with Nietzsche's question:

Must one read Nietzsche, with Heidegger, as the last of the great metaphysicians? Or, on the contrary, are we to take the question of the truth of Being as the last sleeping shudder of the superior man [*höhere Mensch*, as opposed to the *Übermensch*]? Are we to understand the eve as the guard mounted around the house or as the awakening to the day that is coming, at whose eve we are? Is there an economy of the eve?

Perhaps, we are between these two eves, which are also two ends of man. But who, we? (*Margins*, 136; *Marges*, 163–64)

"Who, him, Hegel?" "Who, we?" These, after Hegel, might be the same question.<sup>31</sup> The passage, however, points toward the centrality of Nietzsche's margin in the history of philosophy. In the same gesture a certain centrality of margins in general is inscribed as well. This centrality connotes the impossibility of unconditionally marginalizing anything, particularly what philosophy would like to marginalize most, including Nietzsche. 'Margin' is thus a crucial term, since this *reinscription* of Nietzsche would imply a radical decentralization of all centers, origins, or grounds, including Nietzsche. The target, of course, is the *absolute* or *unconditional*, the *central* sense of the central. Conditionally, locally, margins can also acquire a centrality, priority, or privilege. Their very marginality is itself conditional, particularly in relation to a given set of classical texts and concepts. Otherwise, in their historical and theoretical significance, these margins are quite central. As such, Nietzsche's margin will function differently from, and against, the *centrality* of Nietzsche in Heidegger, where it serves to reinstate and to confirm the truth and the history of the truth, the truth of Being. During recent decades, however, the distribution of centers and margins, and of boundaries between, or within, different figures and fields, such as Hegel, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, philosophy, literary criticism and theory, literature, psychoanalysis, and history, has been radically transformed and decentralized,

and has shifted, for example, in and around Derrida and deconstruction, a great number of times, closer to or away from philosophy.

There are several other crucial questions and question marks in "The Ends of Man," beginning with the question of Hegel and the *Aufhebung*. Then there is the question of Rousseau, opened by Derrida's invocation, in part via Lévi-Strauss, of "the last movement of pity" (*Margins*, 136–37; *Marges*, 163). Given Nietzsche's lifelong critical attitude toward Rousseau, with a little help from Harold Bloom, Rousseau might even be seen as a manifestation of Nietzsche's anxiety of influence against his great precursor theorist of the unconscious.<sup>32</sup> Also, even with Nietzsche's laughter as it is, the burst of laughter still comes from Bataille's laughter—laughter at the comedy of *Aufhebung*, at the seriousness of Hegel, who never laughs at himself.

"Who are we?" is Heidegger's question, too. It is worth tracing it a bit further in Heidegger and Derrida, beyond the "Letter on Humanism," which is Derrida's main text in "The Ends of Man," and beyond "The Ends of Man." The question appears in another "last" text by Heidegger, *On Time and Being*. Derrida cites the essay at an important moment of "The Ends of Man" (131–32) when Heidegger's inscription of "us" as *Dasein* is shown to be grounded in the conception of presence, even if, it should be kept in mind, presence as difference and transformation or becoming, and specifically temporality.<sup>33</sup> Presence determines Heidegger's conception of time, from *Being and Time* to *Time and Being*, and simultaneously fundamentally relates, via *Sein* and *Dasein*, "us" to time and, and as, presence, humanity, and temporality.

Presence, or presence and difference within the economy governed by presence, thus determine everything in Heidegger, but it determines everything as *structure* and not as closure, at least not quite in Derrida's sense, although in fact it does and can only do so *within the closure of presence and the closure of metaphysics*.<sup>34</sup>

In Heidegger, "our question mark" appears at a crucial moment of *On Time and Being* [*Zur Sache des Denkens*] when Heidegger introduces his final major conception, 'appropriation,' as the efficacy of Being and Time, as "presencing of the presence," and thus as that which finally determines the truth and the essence of man. This efficacy, thus, would still be conceived by means of a restricted economy, even though it enacts

a deconstruction or a kind of deconstruction of many a preceding metaphysics, including Heidegger's own earlier economies.

Who are we? We remain cautious in our answer. For it might be that that which distinguishes man as man is determined precisely by what we must think about here: man, who is concerned with and approached by presence [*Anwesenheit*], who, through being thus approached, is himself present in his own way to everything present and absent [*Wer sind wir?* *Wir bleiben vorsichtig mit der Antwort. Denn es könnte so stehen, daß sich das, was den Menschen als Menschen auszeichnet, gerade aus dem bestimmt, was wir hier zu bedenken haben: der Mensch, der von Anwesenheit Angegangene, der aus solchem Angang selber auf seine Weise Anwesende zu allem An- und Abwesenden*]. (*On Time and Being*, 12; *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 12; translation modified)

Derrida follows the Heideggerian trajectory of this question "Who are we?" via *Being and Time* in *Of Spirit* (17). Earlier, however, in his analysis, via Heidegger, of Nietzsche in *Spurs*, Derrida reinserts the parentheses of this question "Who are we?" at an equally important moment of his text:

"Woman"—the word is epoch-making—no more believes in castration's inverse, anti-castration [than she does in castration itself]. She is too clever for that and she knows (and we—but *who, we?*—should learn from her, or at least from her operation) that in truth such a reversal would only deprive her of any possibility of simulacrum; it would in truth amount to the same thing and install her more surely than ever into the same old machinery: in phallogocentrism assisted by its accomplice, the pupil's inverted image, the rowdy student—that is, the disciplined disciple of the master. (61; translation modified, emphasis added)<sup>35</sup>

At this point the question of the unconscious becomes crucial, even, to the extent possible, central—from Nietzsche to Freud to Bataille to Lacan, to all of which proper names, the names of problems, this statement refers. Invading—inhabiting and inhibiting—these and all names and concepts, and multiplying differences and complementarities, the unconscious, processed in the general economy, makes *the* gender difference—*the* woman, *the* man and so forth, impossible. It makes "we" impossible as determined once and for all,<sup>36</sup> and also leads to a very

complex complementarity of gender, which may also be a better rubric than that of difference. The *epoch*<sup>37</sup> made by the name of “woman” is the parenthesis that Heidegger “missed”—*repressed*—in Nietzsche’s “How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error” in *Twilight of the Idols*. Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche and his deconstruction of Heidegger in *Spurs* is *built*—constructed—around this omission. Nietzsche’s one-page “history of an error” is also an ironic parody of Hegel’s interminable *Phenomenology* or *Encyclopedia*, or both at once, possibly with the first, greater, *Logic* between them.

The question “Who are we?” is reinscribed amidst, and *as*, many question marks through yet another frame, even though it is still the frame of Hegel and the *Phenomenology*. This frame, which is also highly significant in many of Derrida’s later writings, especially his most recent ones, such as his essays on Celan, Benjamin, Heidegger, and in “Circumfession,”<sup>38</sup> emerges at the conclusion of “Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas”: “Are we Greeks? Are we Jews? But who, we? Are we (not a chronological, but a pre-logical question) *first Jews or first Greeks?*” (*Writing and Difference*, 153; *L’Écriture et différence*, 228).

Two major references here are Hegel, particularly the *Phenomenology*, and Joyce, via “this proposition from perhaps the most Hegelian of the modern novelists: ‘Jewgreek is greekjew. Extremes meet?’” (*Writing and Difference*, 153; *L’Écriture et différence*, 228). Joyce, in this chain of supplementary substitutions, is thus also “Hegel,” although Derrida would no longer say so in his own later essays of Joyce, unless by that time, Hegel, to whom these essays continue to refer, is conversely “Joyce.” “Violence and Metaphysics” opens with Hegel as its first proper name surrounded by the names of Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger in the context of the question of the death of philosophy. Bataille also refers to Joyce—the most Hegelian or the most anti-Hegelian of modern novelists—and specifically to *Finnegans Wake*, in the passage from *Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice* cited in Derrida’s essay (*Writing and Difference*, 259). Levinas “does not care for Ulysses, nor for the ruses of this excessively Hegelian hero, this man of *nostos* and the closed circle, whose adventure is always summarized in its totality,” and prefers to oppose “to the myth of Ulysses returning to Ithaca . . . the story of Abraham leaving his country forever for an as yet unknown land, and forbidding

his servant to take back even his son to the point of departure'” (*Writing and Difference*, 320 n. 92; *L'Écriture et différence*, 228 n. 1).<sup>39</sup>

Levinas could thus also be seen as Kant in this juxtaposition, which *returns* or reiterates itself in the same terms in *Glas*: “Kant [from Hegel’s perspective] is Jewish: he believes in a jealous, envious God, who hides and guards his *Da*. . . . Those who say God is jealous are liars, Greeks, Jews, or Kantians. Liars or poets, but the poets are liars (Aristotle, before Nietzsche, had recalled the proverb) that comprehend nothing of the difference between day and night” (*Glas*, 213–14; *Glas* II, 297, 299, left columns). This textual play takes place in *Glas*, “from right to left and from left to right,” between the two columns, as the Bible is also customarily printed, one of which is (on) Genet and/on Rembrandt, who painted those magnificent *chiaroscuro* portraits of the biblical Jews; and in the play of *chiaroscuro*, Rembrandt’s portraits are always multiple, plural, complementary—always more than one.

“The impossibility of the return doubtless was not overlooked by Heidegger: the original historicity of Being, the originality of difference, and irreducible wandering all forbid the return to Being *itself* which is nothing. Therefore, Levinas here is in agreement with Heidegger” (*Writing and Difference*, 320 n. 92; *L'Écriture et différence*, 228 n. 1). Derrida’s point is well taken, although one would need of course to qualify the gloss itself of Heideggerian concepts. Heidegger occupies an extremely complex philosophico-political position, both between Kant and Hegel or between Jews and Greeks, in Levinas or Derrida.

Two long footnotes, the last one just referred to really concluding the essay, thus further elaborate the question of the “*absolute difference*,” the question of Hegel, and the absolute otherness, the question of Levinas and the question of “the return,” *via* Heidegger and Joyce. The moment the question of return arises, there enters Nietzsche, who may have been an uneasy reference for Levinas, but was inescapable for Derrida, Freud, or Joyce, or of course Heidegger. Freud enters the scene—a group portrait, again like those of Rembrandt—by way of the “feminine logic” to which Joyce attributes the proposition “jewgreek is greekjew” in the first place. Derrida writes in his concluding footnote:

It is true that “Jewgreek is greekjew” is a *neutral* proposition, anonymous in the sense execrated by Levinas, inscribed in Lynch’s *headpiece*.

"Language of no one," Levinas would say. Moreover, it is attributed to what is called "feminine logic": "Woman's reason. Jewgreek is greek-jew." On this subject, let us note in passing that *Totality and Infinity* pushes the respect for dissymmetry so far that it seems to us impossible, essentially impossible, that it could have been *written* by a woman. Its philosophical subject is man (*vir*). (Cf., for example, the *Phenomenology of Eros*, which occupies such an important place in the book's economy.) Is not this impossibility in principle for a book to have been written by a woman unique in the history of metaphysical writing? Levinas acknowledges elsewhere that femininity is an "ontological category." Should this remark be placed in relation to the essential virility of metaphysical language? But perhaps metaphysical desire is essentially virile, even in what is called woman. It appears that this is what Freud (who would have misconstrued sexuality as the "relationship with what is absolutely other," *TI* [*Totality and Infinity*]), thought, not of desire, certainly, but of libido. (*Writing and Difference*, 320–21 n. 92; *L'Écriture et différence*, 228 n. 1; translation modified, emphasis added)<sup>40</sup>

As it traverses "our question mark"—Who are we?—"Violence and Metaphysics" concludes with Freud, who is also a "jewgreek" perhaps, and the feminine logic of writing. The essay begins with Matthew Arnold's famous statement as its epigraph: "Hebraism and Hellenism,—between these two points of influence moves our world. At one time it feels more powerfully the attraction of one of them, at another time of the other; and it ought to be, though it never is, evenly and happily balanced between them."

There is still plenty of room for Nietzsche in this feminine logic of the "jewgreek is greekjew" in Derrida:

Through its eulogy of simulation, of the "pleasure of pretending" (*die Lust an der Verstellung*), of histrionics, of the "dangerous concept of the artist," *The Gay Science* ranks among artists—who are always experts in simulation—Jews and women. The association of the Jew with woman is probably not insignificant. Nietzsche often treats the two in parallel fashion, which might refer us back again to the motif of castration and simulacrum, even that of the simulacrum of castration for which circumcision is the mark, the name of the mark.

[A travers l'éloge de la simulation, du "plaisir de simuler" (*die Lust an*



*der Verstellung*), de l'histrionisme, du "dangereux concept de l'artiste," *Le Gai Savoir* range parmi les artistes, qui sont toujours des experts en simulation, les Juifs et les femmes. L'association du Juif et de la femme n'est probablement pas insignifiante. Nietzsche les traite souvent en parallèle, ce qui nous renverrait peut-être encore au motif de la castration et du simulacre, voire du simulacre de castration dont la circoncision serait la marque, le nom de la marque.] (*Spurs*, 68–69; translation modified)

The quotation from *The Gay Science* follows. The perhaps feminine logic of writing is also the logic of play and theater and performance. It is thus, in addition, the logic of the performative in Austin's sense, or rather in a sense leading to a deconstruction of Austin, the founder of speech act theory.<sup>41</sup> There the performative has special relationships to performance and citation on the theater stage. In Derrida this would be further related, via Plato and Hegel on the one hand and Mallarmé on the other, to the question of imitation and *dissemination*, which is in turn related, necessarily via Lacan, to castration: "[D]issemination figures that which *cannot be* the father's. Neither in germination, nor in castration [la dissémination figure ce qui *ne revient pas* au père. Ni dans la germination ni dans la castration]" (*Positions*, 86; *Positions*, 120).

The whole literary-theoretical configuration just traversed has had a major significance in the history of feminism and deconstruction in France, from Hélène Cixous's study of Joyce (*The Exile of James Joyce*), published in 1968, up to the present, again importantly through the question of Nietzsche—Nietzsche on the scene of feminism.<sup>42</sup> This difference, the difference of history and the difference of the unconscious, is therefore not closed to the question and the difference of woman or, perhaps better, the gender complementarity. Quite the contrary, the general economy and complementarity of history and the unconscious may be further enriched and enhanced by engaging the question of gender difference and perhaps even must do so at a certain level. It may have to do so against the philosopher, who, it seems, is always "he," and *his* ends, or even against the antiphilosopher and the "first" thinker of the unconscious, Nietzsche. It certainly does so against consciousness of, and as, Hegel.

In the end, then, "Who, he (Hegel)?" and "Who, we?" are perhaps the

same question. Or rather, since there is no such thing as the same question, nor are there anywhere any final ends—neither final goals nor final termination, neither the ends of man nor the end of questions—the question of history and the question of consciousness and the unconscious are suspended in this always immense difference and *complementarity* between the end of man and the end(s) of the philosopher. These questions may demand a complementarity different from that defined by the closure of philosophy, powerful as the latter is.

### Suns, Nights, and Chiaroscuros of Hegel

One must keep vigilance through the best theoretical reason available over “the slumber of [Hegelian] reason,” even though, and because, one needs to exceed Hegel not only in the power of logic and reason—in Hegel’s own game—but also in the Dionysian play of which Nietzsche speaks, or dreams. One must remain uneasily suspended between many excesses—of science in play, play in science, of dream in reason, of reason in dreams, of consciousness in the unconscious, of the unconscious in consciousness:

To bear the self-evidence of Hegel, today, would mean this: one must, in every sense, go through the “slumber of reason,” the slumber that engenders monsters and then puts them to sleep; this slumber must be effectively traversed so that awakening will not be a ruse of dream. That is to say, again, a ruse of reason. The slumber of reason is not, perhaps, reason put to sleep, but slumber in the form of reason, the vigilance of the Hegelian logos. Reason keeps watch over a deep slumber in which it has an interest. Now, if “evidence received in the slumber of reason loses or will lose the characteristics of wakefulness,” then it is necessary, in order to open our eyes (and did Bataille ever want to do otherwise, correctly certain that he was thereby risking death: “the condition in which I *would see* would be to die”), to have spent the night with reason, to have kept watch and to have slept with her: and to have done so throughout the night, until morning, until the other dawn which resembles, even to the point of being taken for it—like daybreak for nightfall—the hour when the philosophical animal can also finally open its eyes. That morning and none other. For at the far reaches of this night something was contrived, blindly, I mean in a discourse, by means of

which philosophy, in completing itself, could both include within itself and anticipate all the figures of its beyond, all the forms and resources of its exterior; and could do so in order to keep these forms and resources close to itself by simply taking hold of their enunciation. Except, perhaps, for a certain laughter. And yet.

To laugh at philosophy (of Hegelianism) [philosophie (du hegélianisme)]—such, in effect, is the form of the awakening—henceforth calls for an entire “discipline,” an entire “method of meditation” that acknowledges the philosopher’s byways, understands his techniques, makes use of his ruses, manipulates his cards, lets him deploy his strategies, appropriates his texts. (*Writing and Difference*, 252; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 370; translation slightly modified)

On this occasion, too, the concluding part of this quotation perhaps describes Derrida’s strategies more than Bataille’s or Nietzsche’s. Certainly, in Derrida it is to an incomparable degree a deliberate strategy—a “method of meditation.” Nietzsche, however, was perhaps the first to *rethink* radically these relationships between reason and dream and think both of the dream-reason—“the dream logic”—and the dream of reason and logic. I am thinking particularly of the passage from *The Gay Science* (no. 54), to which I shall return below. Bataille cites it at a crucial juncture in *Inner Experience* (28), and it is clearly on Derrida’s mind here. Derrida most likely also has in mind Nietzsche’s title “Daybreak [*Morgenröte*],” which is also the break from Hegel and philosophical reason. The *scene* itself might have been taken, by both Bataille and Derrida, from the final paragraph of the *Phenomenology* that speaks of *Geist* “sunk in the *night* of its self-consciousness, but in that night its vanished outer existence is preserved, and this sublated existence [dies aufgehobene Dasein]—the former one, but now reborn out of knowledge [Wissen]—is the new existence, a new world and new shape of *Geist* [In seinem {des Geistes} Insichgehen ist er in der Nacht seines Selbstbewußtseins versunken, sein verschwundenes Dasein aber ist in ihr aufbewahrt; und dies aufgehobene Dasein—das vorige, aber aus dem Wissen neugeborene—ist das neue Dasein, eine neue Welt und Geistesgestalt]” (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590; translation modified, emphasis added).

There are many other relationships of great interest suggested by Derrida’s, Bataille’s, or Hegel’s passages and metaphors. Clearly, sexual met-

aphors are deliberately played out by Derrida and Bataille and, perhaps less deliberately, by Hegel. These are grand, if at times heavy, slumbers, much like *Finnegans Wake*—a reference that may seem obvious but is nevertheless richly evocative, and that was certainly a major one here for Bataille and Derrida.

Goya's arguably most famous *capricho*, *El sueño de la razón*, "The sleep of reason brings forth monsters," was undoubtedly known to Bataille and has many relevant contexts in his text—Surrealism and Picasso; the Spanish war, indeed more than one, from Napoleon on; between "the surrealist manifesto" and "the communist manifesto," or "the existentialist manifesto," or Malraux (*Saturn*), or Baudelaire, or Gautier, and others who have written on Goya—in many writings, and with many hands, writing "from left to right and right to left [*de gauche à droite ou de droite à gauche*]" (*Writing and Difference*, 276; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 406–7). Goya is a crucial presence in *The Tears of Eros*, where Bataille importantly relates Goya to Sade: "Goya . . . reached total aberration in his engravings, his drawings, and his paintings" (134; *Les Larmes d'Éros*, 159–60). Bataille's travels in Spain are recurrently reflected in his writing.<sup>43</sup> There are, for example, some memorable Dionysian scenes—pictures and performances—at the bullfight, before other scenes—landscapes and performances—"Under the *Sun* of Seville," the title of the next chapter in the *Story of the Eye*. Not inconceivably, Goya's etching (1799) may even have been known to Hegel, and the artist's message, verbal and visual, is perhaps closer to Hegel than to what Bataille invokes: "The slumber of reason is not, perhaps, reason put to sleep, but slumber in the form of reason, the vigilance of the Hegelian logos," the logos which dissolves "into sleep" (*The Accursed Share* 3:370).

But then these relationships among light, dark, and chiaroscuro are more complex and indeterminate, and they are constantly shifting in Hegel. Any reading of Goya must proceed in like fashion. In Hegel, we recall, on the one hand: "with the grey in grey life cannot rejuvenate, but can only understand itself. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk" (*The Philosophy of Right*, 13; *Werke* 7:28; translation modified). That, however, was written in 1820, or according to Hegel, on June 25, 1820, and still relates more to the History of *Geist* than to Hegel himself. Or does it? This point, too, must remain undetermined, "with the falling of dusk," the twilight of *Geist* and of Hegel, then

age 50. On the other hand, in 1807, Hegel speaks, against Schelling, of the Abstract Absolute as “the night in which . . . all cows are black [die Nacht . . . , worin . . . alle Kühe schwarz sind]” in the Preface of the *Phenomenology* (*Phenomenology*, 9; *Werke* 3:22)—equally with the “monochromatic” formalism and the “twilight of the idols.” Hegel’s is no doubt a very rich chiaroscuro itself—between growing old, or still being young enough, at least for the philosophic mind—well before the age when Kant completed his major works—or both at once, the sense of completion and mourning—wake—or beginning and morning.

The grey landscape of the owls—the nocturnal life of wisdom or the slumber of wisdom—is brilliantly captured by Goya and his medium, here a most appropriate one. The difference between the light gray and dark gray, almost black, animals and monsters of Goya’s etching no doubt embodies further symbolism. Picasso’s *Guernica*, executed in a medium capable of the richest color spectrum conceivable, the spectrum much closer to *différance* than any dialectic with its control of difference, will give an even more, far more, terrifying meaning to this achromatism. The Minerva symbolism is also richly played out by Goya.<sup>44</sup> The lynx *on the left*, the cat with sharp night vision, is wide awake. For Bataille “the condition in which I *would see* would be to die.” The *owl on the right* offers the sleeper a pen to write, to record . . . What? The slumbers of the unconscious? Consciousness?

“I do not,” Bataille *writes*, “dispute the factor of consciousness without which I would not be writing, but the hand that writes is *dying* and through its death in store evades the limits accepted as it writes (accepted by the writing hand, rejected by the dying hand) [Je ne récusé pas la connaissance sans laquelle je n’écrirais pas, mais cette main qui écrit est *mourante* et par cette mort à elle promise, elle échappe aux limites acceptées en écrivant (acceptées de la main qui écrit, mais refusées de celle qui meurt)]” (*Erotism*, 268 n. 1; *L’Erotisme*, 297 n.; translation modified). This reflection ends a footnote to the question: “What is truth, if we think that which exceeds the possibility of thought?”

I apologize for adding here that this definition of being and excess cannot be given a philosophical foundation, in that excess exceeds foundations; it is through excess itself that being is, first and foremost, outside all limits. Being no doubt also exists within limits: these limits allow us

to speak (I too am speaking, but I do not forget that speech not only eludes me, but that it eludes me even as I speak). These methodically organized sentences are possible (to a great extent they are, since excess is the exceptional, the marvelous, the miraculous . . . ; and excess designates the attraction—the attraction, if not horror of all that is *more than that which is*) but their impossibility is given at the outset; so I am never tied [to their logic], never enslaved, but retain the sovereignty which death severs from me, proving the impossibility of my self-confinement within the limits of being without excess. (*Erotism*, 268 n. 1, *L'Érotisme*, 297 n.; translation modified)<sup>45</sup>

Amidst these chains—or rather un-chainment—an apology to whom? Hegel? Heidegger? And for what? It might, it is true, be impolite enough—*improper*—to exceed “that which is,” to exceed *Being*, consciousness, self-consciousness, self-possession of the language of consciousness, to remove their chains—in short to go beyond Hegel, Heidegger, and philosophy. Bataille’s questions are asked “in a non-philosophical mode,” in the long Hegelian shadow—the confrontation with death that distinguishes masters from slaves. One perhaps must apologize before entering or before excusing oneself and refusing to enter “the rigorous and subtle corridors [les rigoureux et subtils défilés]” of Hegel’s dialectics. They are too elaborate to be traversed without being lost, and as Derrida suggests, “they cannot be summarized without being mistreated [on ne peut les résumer sans les maltraiter]” (*Writing and Difference*, 254; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 374). Heidegger’s presence is also inescapable in Bataille’s passage.<sup>46</sup> But these are the same long corridors, the corridors of philosophy, even though Heidegger also finally puts, or rather, with the dying hand of philosophy, *writes*, Being under erasure—grey on grey, as it were.

“Especially those *long corridors* . . . ‘Corridor metaphysics,’ is what the French call this condition,” Thomas Pynchon *writes*, interestingly enough, about a German film director who may or may not be entirely fictional (*Gravity’s Rainbow*, 459). One cannot help thinking, however, about the French director Alain Resnais and the corridors and mirrors of *Last Year at Marienbad*, and thus inevitably of that other huge shadow, in the shadow of both Freud and Hegel, Jacques Lacan. Or rather, of labyrinths. Even more than an eagle, Hegel might be the Minotaur or Theseus, or both at once: Theseus who refuses to accept or celebrate, as

Nietzsche would, the intractable, unconscious complexity of the labyrinth, the Minotaur whom his reader must confront in the labyrinth. It is a labyrinth that Hegel himself refused to see *as* a labyrinth, only at most as a corridor, whose dialectical monsters can always be mastered by his consciousness in “the ‘slumber of reason,’ the slumber that engenders monsters and then puts them to sleep.” By contrast, the nondialectical textual drift of Bataille’s essay “The Labyrinth” moves from Hegel to Nietzsche, from corridors to labyrinths, from the reasonableness of reason to the lightness of laughter, from mastery to monsters. In *Inner Experience*, in the section also entitled “The Labyrinth (or the Constitution of Beings),” Bataille writes in February 1936 with Picasso and Goya in mind, among other figures of masters and slaves, “from left to right and from right to left”:

[Man] is no longer doing battle with a group equal to the one which he represents, but with Nothingness. In this extreme contest, he can be compared to the bull in the bullfight. The bull in the bullfight is at times heavily absorbed in the animal’s lack of concern—abandoning itself to the secret collapse of death—at times, seized with rage, it rushes forth upon the void which a phantom matador opens before it without respite. But once the void is affronted, it is nudity which the bull embraces—TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS A MONSTER—taking this sin on lightly. Man is no longer, like an animal, the plaything of Nothingness, but Nothingness is itself his plaything—he ruins himself in it, but illuminates its darkness with his *laughter*, which he reaches only when *intoxicated* with the very void which kills him. (*Inner Experience*, 91–92; *L’Expérience intérieure*, 144–45; translation modified)

Who, except possibly Hegel, would risk the Thesean task of going into the heart of Hegel’s shadowy labyrinth and would claim to penetrate its logic, even though Hegel’s engagement might only be in a battle with nothingness like a bull in the bullfight? “Logic,” we recall, is Hegel’s title, too, which he used at least twice for the texts where, as we also recall, he has much to say on being and nothingness. Not even Nietzsche, Bataille, or Derrida, perhaps in the end not even Hegel, would take this risk. It pays not to venture too far into a labyrinth, so that one can still get out. Even the Preface is dangerous enough, perhaps the most dangerous. Daedalus built the labyrinth. Hegel is also Daedalus; and Hegel built his

during the two years he worked on the *Phenomenology*, while believing himself on the verge of madness. But—such was his craftsman's ingenuity—he flew out of it rather than finding his way. Nor would he ever perhaps be able to master or even to see all of its convoluted structure. No flight, except that of the eagle—*aigle*, Hegel—can be sustained long enough for that. One can only glimpse the fragments. Icarus in his flight looked up, but at the sun, not shadows. No way to look at Hegel, either—like the sun he will melt one's wings, sear one's eyes. According to Derrida:

*It remains*, then, for us to *speak* [*Il reste alors à parler*], to make voice *resonate* throughout the corridors in order to make up for [*suppléer*] the breakup of presence. The phoneme, the *akoumenon*, is the *phenomenon of the labyrinth*. This is the *case* with the *phōnē*. Rising toward the sun of presence, it is the way of Icarus.

And contrary to what phenomenology—which is always phenomenology of perception—has tried to make us believe, contrary to what our desire cannot fail to be tempted into believing, the thing itself always escapes.

Contrary to the assurance that Husserl gives us a little further on, “the look” cannot “abide.” (*Speech and Phenomena*, 104; *La Voix et le phénomène*, 116; translation modified, emphasis added)

Derrida writes this on Husserl in closing *Speech and Phenomena*, but clearly and indeed pointedly also with Hegel in mind (101–2: *La Voix et le phénomène*, 114); and this passage both echoes the opening elaborations of “Consciousness” in the *Phenomenology* and is echoed in the opening of *Glas*: “*what . . . of the remain(s) [quoi du reste] . . . for us, here, now, of a Hegel,*” who, too, “always escapes.”<sup>47</sup> Derrida's double or complementary opening of *Glas* consists of these lines, always already quoting Hegel, and a quotation from Genet on “fragmenting” and, as it were, “analytically decomposing” Rembrandt: “*what remained [ce qui est resté] of a Rembrandt torn into small, very regular squares and rammed down the shithole*” is divided in two” (*Glas*, 1a; *Glas* 1, 1). In closing *Speech and Phenomena* Derrida actually comments on Husserl's invocation in *Ideas* of a painting by Teniers in the Dresden gallery, representing a gallery of paintings, each in turn representing paintings, “‘which on their part exhibited readable inscriptions and so forth.’ . . .



Certainly nothing has preceded this situation. Assuredly nothing will suspend it. It is not *comprehended*, as Husserl would want it, by intuitions or presentations. Of the broad daylight of presence, outside the gallery, no perception is given us or assuredly promised us. The gallery is a labyrinth which includes in itself its own exit" (*Speech and Phenomena*, 104; *La Voix et le phénomène*, 117).

To live in the shadow of Hegel may mean two things: to be subsumed by his mighty shadow and to become Hegel to the degree that is possible, or conversely, to explore the unconscious side—the dark deep shadow—of Hegel's system, deemed to be the light of consciousness, of self-consciousness, of understanding, of reason, of mind, of spirit, of *Geist*. Or perhaps it is both at once, or the gray—shadowy—or *chiaroscuro* region—extending how far?

Nor is it that shadow eclipses the sun, either: the sun would be—would it not?—just another shadow of Hegel. A sun perhaps—for a shadow and a metaphor of shadow must always signal a sun of one kind or another. "[M]idnight is also noon, . . . night is also a sun [Mitternacht ist auch Mittag, . . . Nacht ist auch eine Sonne]," Zarathustra says (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 323; *Also sprach Zarathustra*; KSA 4:402; translation modified), giving Bataille his epigraph to *Inner Experience*, together with Van Gogh's night paintings, with their huge star-suns, doubtless on Bataille's mind as well. Can we ever do away with either or both? That would be very difficult, as Derrida shows, and he suggests in "White Mythology"—white like the sun: "Each time that there is a metaphor, there is doubtless a sun somewhere; but each time that there is sun, metaphor has begun [Chaque fois qu'il y a une métaphore, il y a sans doute un soleil quelque part; mais chaque fois qu'il y a du soleil, la métaphore a commencé]" (*Margin*, 251; *Marges*, 300).

Derrida's essay begins with Anatole France. Descartes, however, appears to be its central *figure*—a metaphor: Another sun? Or shadow? Unless it is Aristotle, with whom the concept or metaphor of "metaphor has begun," or Hegel. All these names may be heliotropic enough and exchange incalculably their positions and trajectories as centers or orbits, and their other metaphorical—tropical or topical—values. But the *chiaroscuro* of the French landscape around this theme is also too rich to calculate, and the landscape is at the very least French-German-Spanish—Hegel, Nietzsche, Goya, Picasso. It might even be a garden scene: the text

of France that Derrida reads is *The Garden of Epicurus*; and one of Derrida's sections in this essay is entitled with a *brilliant* multiple pun on sun, in which metaphor—trope—*turns*, which is a trope, too, along with a few other things: "The Flowers of Rhetoric: The Heliotrope." It is possibly also an allusion to Bataille's title "*La Langage des fleurs*" and certainly to much in Genet, as the flower theme becomes prominent in *Glas*. *Glas*, that begins with "religion of flower" in the *Phenomenology*, quickly turns or re-turns to "the flower of rhetoric" (13), and to much of Bataille, in this and other contexts, via Genet, between Hegel and Rembrandt, this great master of *chiaroscuro*, which is also a printing technique. The landscape is also constituted of many a portrait—in the play of *chiaroscuro*, in which each of Rembrandt's portraits multiplies itself; Rembrandt is a great precursor of complementarity.

Bataille is the last proper name in Derrida's essay, in a juxtaposition, alongside Nietzsche, to Hegel and Plato, which may also be read as that between general and restricted economy—"The heliotrope of Plato or of Hegel on the one hand, the heliotrope of Nietzsche and Bataille on the other, to use metonymic abbreviation here" (*Margins*, 271; *Marges*, 324). Such is the sequence, to which one must perhaps add Freud, always more than one, of the movement from consciousness to the unconscious. Among many other texts where he "looks" at the sun or, and as, flowers, and "The Sacrificial Mutilation and the Severed Ear of Vincent Van Gogh" warrants particular mention here, Bataille has an early short essay "Rotten Sun" (1930), part of "*Hommage à Picasso*," in which he speaks, perhaps again with *Zarathustra* in mind, of the two—complementary—suns:

The sun, from the human point of view (in other words, as it is confused with the notion of noon) is the most *elevated* conception. It is also the most abstract object, since it is impossible to look at it fixedly at that time of the day. If we describe the notion of the sun in the mind of one whose weak eyes compel him to emasculate it, that sun must be said to have the poetic meaning of mathematical serenity and spiritual elevation. If on the other hand one obstinately focuses on it, a certain madness is implied, and the notion changes meaning because it is no longer production that appears in light, but refuse or combustion, adequately ex-

pressed by the horror emanating from a brilliant arc lamp. (*Visions of Excess*, 57; "Soleil pourri," *Oeuvres complètes* 1:231)

Bataille's history, or mythology, proceeds through, first another "bull"—"a man slaying a bull (Mithra), with a vulture that eats the liver (Prometheus)"—to end with the myth of Icarus, which "is particularly expressive from this point of view: it clearly splits the sun in two—the one that was shining at the moment of Icarus's elevation, and the one that melted the wax, causing failure and a screaming fall when Icarus got too close" (*Visions*, 58; *Oeuvres complètes* 1:232). Van Gogh, the great painter of suns/flowers, becomes Icarus too, via Prometheus:

There is in fact no reason to separate Van Gogh's ear or Gaston F.'s finger [another case of mutilation Bataille considers] from Prometheus's famous liver. If one accepts the interpretation that identifies the purveying eagle (the *aetos prometheus* of the Greeks) with the god who stole fire from the wheel of the sun, then the tearing out of the liver presents a theme in conformity with the various legends of the "sacrifice of god." . . . The eagle god who is confused with the sun by the ancients, the eagle who alone among all beings can contemplate while staring at "the sun in all its glory," the Icarian being who goes to seek the fire of the heavens is, however, nothing other than an automutilator, a Vincent Van Gogh, a Gaston F. All the wealth he derives from the mythical delirium is limited to the incredible vomiting of the liver, ceaselessly devoured and ceaselessly vomited by the gaping belly of the god. (*Visions*, 70; *Oeuvres complètes* 1: 268–69)

It could also be Nietzsche who "gazes" on the sun, at least in his texts, beginning with *The Birth of Tragedy* or perhaps earlier, and who is in turn one of Bataille's unavoidable "sources" here.<sup>48</sup>

From this history—or histories, for there are many, those of mythology and of Bataille's own thinking and text—Bataille manages to derive an early anticipation of the general economy and its excess, via Picasso:

it would be *a priori* ridiculous to try to determine the precise equivalence of such movements in an activity as complex as painting. It is nevertheless possible to say that academic painting more or less corresponds to an elevation—*without excess*—of the spirit. In contemporary painting,

however, the search for that which most ruptures elevation, and for a blinding brilliance, has a share in the elaboration or decomposition of forms, though strictly speaking this is only noticeable in the paintings of Picasso. (*Visions*, 58; *Oeuvres complètes* 1:232; emphasis added)

If in fact one looks for major examples of complementarity in visual art, one cannot find better ones than Van Gogh and, even more strikingly, Picasso. Pais, interestingly, found it necessary to report that “among the paintings hanging in [Bohr’s] house was one by a founder of cubism [Jean Metzinger]” (*Niels Bohr’s Times*, 25, 335), while Einstein, he reports, did not care for cubist landscapes, any more than for the landscapes of quantum mechanics (“*Subtle is the Lord . . .*,” 16).

For Nietzsche, however, it is “high noon [*Mittag*]” rather than twilight, the moment [*Augenblick*] of the briefest shadow, end of the longest error,” when Zarathustra begins: “*INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA*.” *Augenblick* is a complex word—*Auge*: eye; *Blick*: glance. The glance of an eye? At the sun? Or just the wink of an eye? Nietzsche does seem to look at anything in the sentence. But then one cannot be sure, not even Nietzsche himself who has, and knows that he has, conscious and unconscious protection—Apollinian protection, for example. Darkness appearing in the eyes looking at the sun protects and heals the eyes; light—Apollo—protects and heals against darkness “gruesome night [*grausiger Nacht*]”—Dionysus (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 67; KSA 1:65).<sup>49</sup> “Midnight is also noon, . . . night is also a sun.” The play here becomes very complex. Nietzsche, however, as much as Hegel, would celebrate the eagle’s eyes and whatever protects and enables them to look at the sun, or the lynx’s eyes that see through the night. There is, however, always a danger in looking at a sun, for example, the danger, which Shelley invokes, also using the image of the eagle flying directly into the sun in order to renew its vision: “The sense that he was greater than his kind / Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit blind / By gazing on its own exceeding light” (*Julian and Maddalo*, 50–52). For Nietzsche to see may not be to die, as for Bataille. Both know, however, that one can never be sure about what one sees. Perhaps one needs a *new* sun, or new eyes. For a little earlier, in history and in Nietzsche’s text, referring to Kant: “At bottom, the old sun, but seen through mist and skepticism. The idea has become elusive, pale, Nordic, Königsbergian [Die alte Sonne in Grunde, aber durch Nebel

und Skepsis, hindurch; die Idee sublim geworden, bleich, nordisch, königsbergisch]"—easy to look at, too: a setting sun, or an old star—or “gray morning, the first yawn of reason. The cockcrow of positivism [Grauer Morgen. Erstes Gähnen der Vernunft. Hahnenschrei des Positivismus]” (*Twilight of the Idols, The Portable Nietzsche*, 485; KSA 6:80).

The “old sun,” the old idea of philosophy, Kant’s or Hegel’s, is only a long shadow of the longest error, certainly not something Nietzsche is afraid to look at. Perhaps, however, he does not look at it, protecting his eyes, does not read the texts of this sun. There is no way to be sure; perhaps he does. For my part, I think that he often does—often very well, better than many *reading* readers. Nietzsche has other protective powers: attack, for one. The saying frequently, if not invariably, holds true: the best defense is a good offense. “*Eine Streitschrift*” is Nietzsche’s characteristic subtitle to the *Genealogy*—“An Attack Writing”—an attack by *writing*. Nietzsche does not offer us his readings as readings. If we want to read him as a reader, we must look for the readings in his *writing*, “not originally subordinate to the logos and the truth” (*Of Grammarology*, 19; *De la grammatologie*, 33).

Joyce—the most Hegelian and the most anti-Hegelian of modern novelists—makes Stephen Dedalus or Daedalus-Icarus say, “History . . . is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake” (*Ulysses*, 35). “To awake” might not be good enough—not enough to exceed Hegel, both because we might need a great deal of history and because we might, as Nietzsche understood so well, need to continue to dream, even if possibly a different dream, or can only awaken to another dream, or another nightmare. Joyce might have sensed it too: History, like—and for Stephen and Joyce, *as*—Ireland, *cannot* be awakened from. Although Buck Mulligan’s first nickname for Stephen is Kinch, a close second, for himself and Stephen, is “the *Übermensch*”: “I’m the *Übermensch*. Toothless Kinch and I, the supermen” (24). In the passage in *The Gay Science*, central for Bataille, and very likely known to Joyce, too, Nietzsche writes:

*The Consciousness of Appearance* [das Bewußtsein vom Scheine].—How wonderful and new and yet how gruesome and ironic I find my position vis-à-vis the whole of existence in the light of my insight! I have discovered for myself that the human and animal past, indeed the whole

primal age and past of all sentient being continues in me to invent, to love, to hate, and to infer. I suddenly woke up in the midst of this dream, but only to the consciousness that I am dreaming and that I must go on dreaming lest I perish—as a somnambulist must go on dreaming lest he fall. What is “appearance” for me now! Certainly not the opposite of some essence: what could I say about any essence except to name the attributes of its appearance! Certainly not a dead mask that one could place on an unknown  $x$  or remove from it!

Appearance is for me that which lives and is effective and goes so far in its self-mockery that it makes me feel that this is appearance and will-o'-the-wisp and a dance of spirits and nothing more—that among all these dreamers, I, too, who “know,” am dancing my dance; that the knower is a means for prolonging the earthly dance and thus belongs to the master of ceremony of existence; and that the sublime consistence and interrelatedness of all knowledge perhaps is and will be the highest means to *preserve* the universality of dreaming and the mutual comprehension of all dreamers and thus also *the continuation of the dream*. (*The Gay Science*, 116; KSA 3:416; translation modified)

It is a different dream and a different dance, and a different knowledge—“a knowledge that is not a knowledge at all”—perhaps of a few of those things too “in heaven and earth,” that cannot be “dreamt of in [our] philosophies” (*Hamlet* I.v.168). It might rest, though, on the same “unconscious”—“We are such stuff / as dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep” (*Tempest* IV.i.156–58)—that also creates the dreams of philosophy, including those that philosophy wants to forget in the name of consciousness and memory.

None of this is forgotten by Nietzsche's dream, even if it might still be only a dream. Philosophy often forgets this. The Nietzschean dream, however, does not forget how much it forgets, even though at other moments his dreams, like others, for example, Hegel's, may forget it, too. Hegel knows, too, that he and his text forget—and must forget, and must remember to forget—although never to the degree of Nietzsche's understanding. *Geist* is, of course, different, it never forgets—never forgets and never sleeps—it has no unconscious.

It was Nietzsche's great insight that consciousness forgets just as much as dreams do, if we can attribute such things as memory or forgetting to

dreams, which are never present and which we can only remember. Nietzsche's is still the dance of Spirits, *der Geistertanz*, in the shadow of Hegel, the inescapable ghost—not forgotten by Nietzsche, either—and the great dreamer of the science of appearance—*phenomenology*—and of the truth behind appearances, the masks of the truth—unknown but truth. “The truth of metaphysics is the truth of masks,” Oscar Wilde concludes his great essay on Shakespeare, “The Truth of Masks” (in *The Artist as Critic*). “What would he [Oscar Wilde] have thought of this card? of the inversion of names and places? He knew it perhaps [Qu’aurait-il pensé de cette carte? de l’inversion des noms et des places? Il la connaissait peut-être],” Derrida comments in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud, and Beyond*,” via uncircumventable Hegel (32; *La carte postale*, 38). “Plato dictates, Socrates writes,” only a postscriptum—PS: Plato/Socrates—to the *Phenomenology* perhaps.

The *Phenomenology*'s dream ends with the Golgotha of *Geist*. No place for an eagle, for a vulture perhaps. But then “Aeschylus said that his tragedies were fragments of the great banquets of Homer.”<sup>50</sup> And whose fragments are Homer's great banquets, whose awakenings, and whose wakes? “. . . the songs and wars of earth / before Pelides' [Achilles's] death, or Homer's birth,” as Byron said (*Don Juan* IV.104)—Byron, also an important guest-ghost at the great banquets of *Finnegans Wake*.

Aeschylus did not offer the eagles an honorable lot, either: the vulture that eats Prometheus's liver, as Bataille reminds us, but Aeschylus's audience needed no reminding, is identified with the sun, the sun-night-shadow, Hegel's sun, rather than Homer's, or Zarathustra's, the *light* one. “Then verily the winged hound of Zeus, the ravening eagle, coming an unbidden banqueter the whole day long, with savage appetite shall tear thy body piecemeal into great rents and feast his fill upon thy liver till it be black with gnawing wounds” (*Prometheus Bound* ll. 1021–25). “The whole day long,” before one can dream and dance in the night, “night [that] is also a sun,” “. . . high noon, the moment [*Augenblick*] of the briefest shadow. INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.”

# **MEDIATION, HISTORY, AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS**

... dans l'esprit de Hegel, ce qui est  
immédiat est mauvais ...

—Bataille, *L'Erotisme*

**CHAPTER**



This chapter outlines the main contours of Hegel's vision of history and consciousness, defined by their mutual determination and unity.

The first section offers an introductory discussion of this codetermination and unity, which Hegel translated into the unity of history and *self*-consciousness, defining the Hegelian understanding of history and consciousness and the Hegelian always historical and always self-conscious spirit—*Geist*.

The second section considers the relationships between the immediate and the mediated in Hegel. These relationships form a crucial aspect of the Hegelian economy. This economy is always an economy of mediation, but is grounded in the mediation that mediates the immediate—and im-mediate the mediated, makes it immediate in the sense of configuring mediation by means of presence and the continuum. As a result it inescapably conforms to the metaphysics of presence—in this case, the becoming-presence—and restricted economy. The relationships between the immediate and the mediated in Hegel are conditioned by the unity of the infinitist becoming-presence—the continuum—and self-consciousness, which mutually enable each other within the Hegelian economy—



the historical self-consciousness, as it may be called—and define its specificity within a broader spectrum of the metaphysics of presence. A major implication of this economy is the infinity and infinitude of history in Hegel—both in the sense of its intensive continuum—the local infinitude of Hegelian formations, such as *Geist's* self-consciousness, which makes possible the reduction of difference in presence, even if becoming-presence—and in the sense of its extensive continuum—the interminability of the historical process in Hegel. I shall suggest that what Hegel inscribes may be best seen as the closure of history rather than the end of history, as it is at times claimed. I shall also consider, in this context, the relationships between history and philosophy or science [Wissenschaft] in Hegel.

The third section discusses the economy of conceptual determination in Hegel. Its primary function, I shall argue, is the control of differential and transformational play within the Hegelian economy, which is always the economy of difference, exteriority, and transformation, but by virtue of the control of interpretive and historical transformation it demands, it is always a restricted economy. I shall also discuss the economy of force [Kraft] and the play of forces [das Spiel der Kräfte] developed in the chapter “Force and Understanding” of Hegel’s *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, where Hegel offers, often against his own grain, anticipations of general economic ideas.

## Conjunctions

Given the significance of the question of history for the present study, its Hegel could be *The Philosophy of History*, particularly the Introduction. One can also say, however, that Hegel *is* the introduction to the philosophy of history. Commenting on the *conclusion* of the *Phenomenology* in his *introduction* to reading Hegel, Kojève states that “for Hegel, the introduction of History into philosophy is his principal and decisive discovery” (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 161). The historical field—*Geschichte*—opened by Hegel far exceeds the history of philosophy, however; and, as I shall suggest, the conclusion or the *closure* of the *Phenomenology* already inscribes this extension. Perhaps one can, or must, take the term ‘closure’ in either sense—as the end of the book or the closure of Hegelianism, the closure of philosophy and history. Hegel,

the introduction to the philosophy of history, may thus also be its conclusion or its closure, difficult to leave behind whenever history is at issue.

The unconscious has an altogether different place in Hegel, in part by virtue of Hegel's *conscious* opposition to it. While Hegel's philosophy is always the philosophy of history, it is always philosophy *against* the unconscious. It is true that this opposition to the unconscious may be seen as defining philosophy throughout its history. If so, however, this long-standing agenda—the reduction or elimination of the unconscious from, at least, theoretical and scientific thinking—still culminates in Hegel. In the history of the idea of history, history and the unconscious have been, and perhaps had to be, defined against each other before they could define each other.

The term 'history'—*Geschichte*—as understood by Hegel, designates and necessarily conjoins both the historical process—*res gestae*—and historical writing—*historia rerum gestarum* (*The Philosophy of History*, 60; *Werke* 12:83). For Hegel, however, there is only one true History—'Geschichte'—and one true Consciousness—*Bewußtsein*<sup>1</sup>: the History and Consciousness of, and *as*, the always conscious and always historical Spirit—*Geist*. Simultaneously, History-*Geist* is the only one that is truly conscious and Consciousness-*Geist* is the only one that is truly historical. All other forms of history—*Geschichte* and *Historie*—and consciousness, individual and collective, are tied, via multiple and complex mediation governed by *Geist*, to this grand unity of history and consciousness in *Geist*. *Geist* as Consciousness-History—*Bewußtsein-Geschichte*—governs all other forms of history and consciousness, such as human consciousness or actual human history, but cannot be identified with them. Hegel employs many other terms—such as, to list the most notable ones, 'mediation' [*Vermittlung*], 'becoming' [*Werden*], 'self' [*Selbst*—in order to inscribe this economy, where governing and subordinate configurations reciprocally determine and inhabit and, against Hegel, inhibit each other.

It would not be possible to give a general definition of *Geist*, and Hegel never quite does so. One may well conclude that *Geist* is best defined, in a modern or postmodern fashion, as a play of forces, and Hegel, as shall be seen, says so himself in the section of "Force and the Understanding" [*Kraft und Verstand*] of the *Phenomenology*. One must, however, also carefully discriminate between different theoretical economies where a

play of forces is defined, especially between restricted and general economies, but also among different economies designated by either rubric. It is useful to list a few of *Geist*'s defining features, even though some of these will be more debatable than others, and all of them are interpretable:

- its jointly historical and (self-)conscious nature;
- its preoccupation with cognition and self-cognition as its primary activity;
- its all-encompassing nature and the wholeness of its constitution;
- its excess in every aspect of its nature over all corresponding human economies—individual or, importantly, collective—even though “the movement of carrying forward [hervorzutreiben] the form of its self-knowledge is the labor [die Arbeit] which it accomplishes as *actual History* [wirkliche Geschichte]” (*Phenomenology*, 488; *Werke* 3:586)<sup>2</sup>;
- its role as a transcendental structure—a transcendental signified, or a complex economy of both transcendental signifieds and transcendental signifiers, in Derrida's sense—controlling, even while unfolding with ever-increasing richness, the play of historical and interpretive transformations.

There is no way finally to untangle or to claim to do so at whatever level—*Geist*, Being, Nature, History, Culture, Capital, Logic, or whatever—the hermeneutic circle, Hegelian, Heideggerian, or other, and to rigorously close the field of such concepts. One would not be able to produce such a classical—restricted—hermeneutic economy *in principle*, rather than only *in practice*, as most classical hermeneutics, including Hegelian and Heideggerian, would recognize. To a great extent, economies such as that of Hegel's *Geist* or Heidegger's *Sein* can be seen as the *principles* of both hermeneutic resolution and control of the economy, which would be prohibited in a general economy. As Bataille's, Derrida's, and a number of more recent analyses would show, against Hegel's own logic or against the claims of his logic, Hegel's concepts also inhibit and self-deconstruct each other within and by the drift of his text. In terms of this study, these concepts become *de facto* complementary and general economic; and Hegel's project and text become recomprehended accordingly. The drift or, one might say, *différance* of Hegel's text and the interplay of his concepts defy Hegel's claims concerning the possibility of synthesis, and thus of *Geist*, or later the Idea, which synthesis he strug-

gles, but ultimately fails, to produce in his text. A classical text, such as Hegel, or Heidegger,<sup>3</sup> can only claim the wholeness, never rigorously sustain or, to begin with, produce it.

Hegel's logic, as discussed earlier, cannot be sustained even within the limit he assigns to it; and his claims depend on various forms of nonlogic. Nor can one liberate Hegel's logic from exterior historical determinations. It is not that Hegel himself claims or seeks such a liberation, but that others sometimes do, claiming the necessity of understanding Hegel on "his own terms."<sup>4</sup> One cannot, however, master this historical exterior by means of Hegelian logic, any more than one can suspend it. In any event, Hegel's "own terms" do need to be considered, even if he does not quite own them; and one must, once again, always consider the chain of his concepts. Furthermore, Hegel's logic remains operative and effective within differently figured limits and constitutes a necessary, *complementary*, part of a complementary general economy of history at issue in the present study; and, as we have seen, general economies often depend on and complementarize restricted economies.

All the nuances of the Hegelian economy of consciousness, self-consciousness, and knowledge cannot be fully explored here; no single study may be able to encompass them. But they can be read according to or *made* congruent with the present analysis, so as to generate at least one possible *reading*. As I stated at the outset of this study, my aim here is not a reading of Hegel as such, in whatever sense of 'reading,' but the theoretical possibilities and impossibilities created by Hegel's text and its history. Some reading, however, in various senses of the term, must inevitably be engaged. One must *read*, whether one wants or claims to do so or not; and one can read only via other readings and readings of readings.

The present project also involves overt or implicit engagements with the readers, or nonreaders and antireaders, of Hegel—to name the most prominent cases, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Kojève, Bataille, Hyppolite, or Derrida. In the first place, however, this process can never be reduced to such engagements, not even in the declared practice of reading; moreover, other textual engagements cannot always be seen as reading.<sup>5</sup> Second, new theoretical possibilities or impossibilities can never be unconditionally determined by one's relationships, by way of reading or otherwise, with Hegel's text. They are determined general economically, even though and indeed because all unconditional determinations

must be suspended under the condition of general economy. This difference in determination does not unconditionally suspend all responsibilities of reading; but these relationships must be understood general economically.

One cannot claim to exhaust or control the complex network of Hegelian concepts under any conditions of reading. Hegel struggled to do so all his life but always lost, even in his greatest victories. Hegel's text enacts an unprecedented exploration and problematization of the possibilities and the limits of consciousness and self-consciousness. He achieves an extraordinarily profound analysis of reflexivity—both human, individual and collective, and *Geist's*—and their fundamental interrelation. The greatest example of this confrontation may well be his legendary struggle to complete the *Phenomenology*. *Thinking* through this project, believing himself going mad, *writing*, even *printing*—we can distinguish these only provisionally—was perhaps Hegel's greatest war, won and lost at once. Historically, we recall, the completion of the *Phenomenology*—Hegel's war—coincided with the defeat of the Prussians by Napoleon at Jena in 1806—the time and space of the *Phenomenology*—its “signature event context.”<sup>6</sup> This victory of text—the victory of *writing*—over Hegel was in the end a good thing, giving an even richer complexity to the case. One can, however, make a few claims about Hegel's claims, such as that Hegel *insists* on consciousness, self-consciousness, and history, which claims define Hegel's great war for the control of his own text.<sup>7</sup>

The oscillations between the relative significance of history or consciousness, or the relative priority of one over another, represent the history of reading Hegel. To suspend altogether or even diminish the role of one or another would be profoundly “unfaithful” to the letter and spirit of Hegel's text, although, given the complexity of the Hegelian economy, one cannot speak simply of history and consciousness as having an equal or symmetrical function. One must instead engage complex, multiply complementary interactions between them and explore their efficacious dynamics, thus refiguring Hegel's text in a general economy and complementarity, first between history and consciousness and then—or simultaneously—the unconscious. One must do so in part against Hegel, playing out Hegel against himself, confronting one Hegel with another, or various “Hegels” against other “Hegels,” continuously strati-

fyng and complementarizing Hegel's text. Hegel resists the unconscious through his restricted dialectical economy, the economy of *Aufhebung*, whereby the unity of history and consciousness is achieved, or rather claimed. This restricted economy must be juxtaposed to the general economy and complementarity, both as a general matrix and as specifically relating history and the unconscious.

Historical determination is irreducible at any point of Hegel's text, beginning at least with *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, "The Science of the Experience of Consciousness,"<sup>8</sup> where its role was profoundly understood by both Kojève and Jean Hyppolite.<sup>9</sup> The *economy* of the historical determination at issue need not imply that history, in its more customary sense, is Hegel's only concern in the *Phenomenology*. Hegelian logic, although reciprocal in this sense, actually proceeds more in the opposite direction. First, the Hegelian economy of all philosophical determination entails, together with consciousness and self-consciousness, a certain fundamental historicity as the structure of difference, mediation, and becoming. History, then, in its more conventional sense, would in turn be determined on the basis of this economy—the economy of Hegelian spirit, *Geist*, and the spirituality of spirit, and its conscious and self-conscious nature. This economy determines human history as World History [Weltgeschichte], as it is elaborated most specifically in the *Philosophy of History*. A crucial, defining aspect of this determination is its reciprocal nature. In a certain sense, the *Phenomenology* or the *Encyclopedia* or even the first *Logic* can be translated into the *Philosophy of History*, or into the *History of Philosophy*. These transpositions cannot fail to be engaged, although the equivalence of such translations would not necessarily follow. General economically, they manifest different complementarities or, in Derrida's terms, different effects of the *différance* of philosophy and history. In Hegel, by contrast, these transpositions are seen as governed and unified within the *restricted* economy of *Geist*, manifold and complex as this economy is.<sup>10</sup>

The equally irreducible conscious determination in Hegel is itself determined by self-consciousness, again within a complex economy relating various levels and stages of consciousness and self-consciousness. The overwhelming presence, in whatever sense of the term, of this determination by consciousness and self-consciousness in Hegel, in specifically defining *Geist* or in general, is inescapable, given Hegel's many direct for-

mulations and the everywhere irreducible functioning of the terms and concepts inscribing both. Hegelian *Geist* is always conscious and self-conscious spirit. This proposition has not, I think, ever been questioned in the literature on Hegel, whatever field or register of reading—classical philosophy, deconstruction, or other—is engaged. Of course, it can and must be given its due Hegelian textual and conceptual complexity. These complications arise both by virtue of the unconscious forces shaping this text and these margins or Hegel's own relevant elaborations, such as the analysis of desire in the *Phenomenology*, which was a major influence on Kojève, Bataille, and Lacan.<sup>11</sup>

All human consciousness and knowledge, and particularly philosophy as, according to Hegel and philosophy, the best human knowledge and consciousness, are determined in relation to the Consciousness, always historical, of *Geist* as Self-Consciousness. The truth of *Geist*'s Consciousness is *Geist*'s Self-Consciousness: the truth of human consciousness and self-consciousness is its consciousness of *Geist*'s Self-Consciousness. History, in the ultimate sense pertaining to *Geist*, and various histories that *Geist* generates and unifies mediate this relationship. Only that in human history which belongs—properly, authentically—to *Geist* may be, and is, truly historical. Everything else, and there is much else, is incapable of true historicity and is discarded by *Geist* in the course of History.

It is important that, whatever *Geist* discards, it discards consciously. For *Geist* has an enormous capacity for conserving anything even as it negates in the *Aufhebung*, which is defined by this double or triple—negating, conserving, and superseding—operation. Through *Aufhebung*, *Geist* thus transforms and improves everything it conserves. It does not conserve everything, however.

Interactively, Hegel's concepts—mediation, reflexivity, purposiveness, consciousness, and self-consciousness—must in the end, in Absolute Knowledge, enact a tremendous reduction of difference in presence—the becoming of presence, the continuum—and, in Heideggerian terms, a presencing of presence. Hegel's goal is a play of differences and transformations that preserves presence and sustains it as presence at each point of the flow—in the continuum—thereby also controlling the differential play, the flow of becoming. 'Mastery' might be a better term in this sense. Difference is reduced only as the unconscious—that is, as the difference that inhibits, disrupts, or destroys the continuum and wholeness—within

Hegel's economy of difference or of the interplay and *unity* of identity and difference, which unity, crucially, defines the economy of the Ground [der Grund] in both *Logics*. As such, however, Hegel's restricted economy of difference is an enormous reduction of difference, finally, in Absolute Knowledge, fully dissolved in continuity and presence, although this dissolution is, again, configured by means of a complex economy. In this sense, a deconstruction of the ground in the broadest sense—the deconstruction of the metaphysics of the ground as the metaphysics of presence—would entail a deconstruction of the complex economies of difference and identity, permanence and transformation, grounding and suspending grounds. Otherwise such a deconstruction would not be able to undermine and exceed Hegel, or other major classical economies of difference, perhaps most importantly Heidegger.

It may be useful at this point to comment on the question of the metaphysical and nonmetaphysical interpretation of Hegel, and on the difference between different understandings of the metaphysical itself in Hegel or in general. To reiterate the main point, according to the present analysis, Hegelian economy is always a restricted economy and thus the *metaphysics* of presence in Derrida's sense, even if it can, and indeed must, be seen as an economy—a restricted economy—of difference, mediation, transformation, becoming, and so forth. One can, however, easily think of a variety of “metaphysical” and “nonmetaphysical” readings of Hegel, along different, some restricted and some general economic, lines of understanding of Hegel and the term ‘metaphysical’ itself, beginning with Hegel's own views of the matter and his own writing.<sup>12</sup> The point to be made here, however, is the qualification of the rubric of presence and metaphysics as the metaphysics of presence in Derrida's sense, specifically as against Heidegger's or indeed Hegel's.

This issue, and specifically Hegel's complex and equivocal position in this respect, which must be stressed, is itself the main subject of the present study. There are many differences, often fundamental between the reading of Hegel in Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, Althusser, Deleuze, or Derrida and their claims concerning the nature of metaphysics in Hegel. These are all different views of Hegel and metaphysics. In the wake of Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, and Derrida, the present reading sees Hegel's economy as above all historical, transformational—Heraclitean—but still as a restricted economy and therefore the meta-



physics of presence, here a becoming-presence, or logocentrism and ontotheology. At least, as I suggest here, it would be very difficult to argue otherwise. All classical readings, certainly the studies by Heinrichs, Heinrich, Fulda, Hartmann, Theunissen, or more recently Desmond Pippin, can only be seen as metaphysical or logocentrist readings from this perspective, although the differences between them should be kept in mind. That these readings are metaphysical *readings* in this sense is at times their virtue, making them better readings, although more complex and, in this sense, *less* metaphysical readings of Hegel are available, specifically those by Heidegger, Bataille, Derrida, and de Man. It is indeed true that, as Jean Hyppolite phrases it: “[Hegel’s] speculative reflection—or absolute reflection—replaces the old dogmatic metaphysics” (*Logique et existence*, 106). But this replacement is also an installment of one of the most powerful—perhaps the most powerful, even after Heidegger—forms of ontotheology as the metaphysics of presence in the—Heraclitean—form of becoming. The point is of great importance because the strategy continues to repeat itself. We need all the power of critical thought against Hegel, even if we may still have to live in his shadow.

All Hegel’s concepts, to reiterate, must be related within his meticulously assembled economy, through which, and only through which, their meanings—or rather, their operation—can be approached. Hegel certainly wants and attempts thus to relate them. If, as Locke observes, “general ideas are fictions and contrivances of the mind” (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* 2: 274), Hegel’s “fictions” are contrived and maintained with great care and ingenuity. Everything that counts must be related to and determined by consciousness and—and *as*—self-consciousness. Dis-connectedness from consciousness, or *un*-consciousness, is what makes things dis-counted and places them outside *Geist* and History. History in its more conventional sense, World History, is determined by this economy of *Geist* as historical and self-conscious spirit. Hegel writes in his Introduction to *The Philosophy of History*: “This self-contained existence of *Geist* is none other than self-consciousness—consciousness of [its] own being [Dieses Beisichselbstsein des Geistes ist Selbstbewußtsein, das Bewußtsein von sich selbst]. . . . The World History [Weltgeschichte] is merely shows how *Geist* comes to a consciousness and adoption [Wollen] of the Truth: the dawn of knowledge appears [es dämmert in ihm]; it begins to discover salient principles

[Hauptpunkte], and last arrives at full *consciousness* [Bewußtsein]" (*The Philosophy of History*, 17, 53; *Werke* 12:30, 73–74; translation modified).

On the one hand, then, there is always consciousness, and on the other, always historicity—the determination of *Geist* and its Truth, Consciousness and Self-Consciousness, Knowledge, Reason, Science, and Absolute Knowledge as historical. If consciousness and knowledge are, by definition, determination and determinability and if Absolute Knowledge is absolute determinability, this determinability is itself determined *historically* by Hegel. It is History, perhaps even more than Science, although never more than Self-Consciousness, that makes Knowledge into knowledge and Absolute Knowledge into the *absolute* knowledge. In this sense, History may even be more dialectical than Science itself.

Curiously, in Pippin's *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*, the question of self-consciousness in Hegel is barely related to the question of history. After very brief remarks in the Introduction against historicist readings of Hegel—"the 'historical spirit' of Hegel" (5–6)—the very word 'history' is hardly mentioned, appearing only a few times throughout the book. This strategy is partly deliberate. Of the two sides of reading as previously indicated—history and self-consciousness—in Pippin's work, as in most Anglo-American scholarship on Hegel, the balance is shifted toward self-consciousness, which for Pippin defines Hegel's idealism, via Kant. This Kantianization of Hegel, for which there are many compelling reasons, to some extent explains the repression of history in the book.

From the *Phenomenology* on, however, no self-consciousness and no satisfaction of self-consciousness is possible in Hegel outside history, even if one wants to guard against historicist oversimplifications of Hegel, for example, at the expense of self-consciousness. Perhaps philosophical specificity, including that of philosophical reading and commentary, demands a repression of both history, on one hand, and that which is in radical—unconscious and general economic—excess of history, on the other. This repression may take place in the name of history, as in Hegel, or by way of absence of the name "history." But the resulting economy, reading, or commentary can never exceed Hegel or comprehend, and thus, in a certain sense, understand Hegel. As Coleridge would have it, it can never understand Hegel's ignorance, and in most cases would remain

ignorant of Hegel's understanding. Even Heideggerian modes of analysis would exhibit this repression, whether in his reading of Hegel or in general, although Heidegger is hardly ignorant of Hegel's understanding.

As I have pointed out, such repression may also be operative in a deconstructive analysis of a more philosophical orientation, such as in Gasché, which offers, within these philosophical limits, a rigorous treatment of the Hegelian and more generally philosophical reflexivity, and produces arguably as Derridean a reading of reflexivity in Hegel and in general as possible within the philosophical register.

Perhaps, insofar as one's goal is the understanding of Hegel's own views, given the role of consciousness in Hegel, the suspension of the unconscious or of general economy is understandable, although not productive. History is a different case; for, all his insistence on history notwithstanding, it is history, perhaps even more than or, better, complementarily with the unconscious that enacts the greatest conflict in Hegel's text and that compels and enables us to exceed Hegel and philosophy.

Pippin's book can be positioned and positions itself as a *philosophical* commentary. As such, again along with most other Anglo-American approaches to Hegel or indeed, with few exceptions, anything else on the part of institutionalized philosophy, it can be juxtaposed first to Heideggerian commentary and then to deconstructive and post-deconstructive, or poststructuralist, styles of reading, theoretical or critical, in the margins of philosophy. Pointedly, perhaps even centrally, if overtly marginally—in a footnote—this question emerges in Pippin's book itself (261–62 n. 7): “recently [in France] the speculative Hegel has been the object of interest again, mostly as a whipping boy for Bataille, Deleuze, and Derrida.” This comment is hardly a responsible or useful assessment, even in a footnote, and even leaving aside that Bataille's encounter in fact precedes some earlier encounters invoked by Pippin, such as Sartre's, Merleau-Ponty's, Hyppolite's, and Ricoeur's. Nor can another of Pippin's remarks to that effect be seen as responsible; certainly nothing is offered to support the claim: “Much of the contemporary French *attack* [?] on Hegel seems to me *simply* [?] to *reproduce* [?] the Heideggerian approach. I have in mind *inter alia* the work of Deleuze [*Nietzsche and Philosophy*] . . . and Derrida [*‘From Restricted to General Economy,’ ‘The Pit and the Pyramid’*]” (*Hegel's Idealism*, 286 n. 15; emphasis added).

The same would have to be said concerning Pippin's treatment of

Heidegger himself. Pippin's subtitle—"satisfactions of self-consciousness"—is of course a quotation from Hegel, who speaks of the satisfaction of self-consciousness in another self-consciousness. The theme, however, is brilliantly recast by Heidegger's observation, which in fact captures, and at a more profound level, the questions at issue in Pippin's analysis: "In Hegel, the need consisted in the satisfaction of thought. For us, on the contrary, the plight of what is unthought in what is thought reigns" (*Heraclitus Seminar*, 162). Moreover, Heidegger's reading in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, which Pippin ignores, offers an extraordinary analysis of relationships to Kant, also a major issue in Pippin's analysis. Pippin correctly suggests that much of Habermas's critique of Hegel and his own version of a dialectic of enlightenment can be criticized by using Hegel; and, as is often the case, Hegel in fact addresses these problems quite directly, without Habermas realizing and adhering to Hegel's critique of analogous or equivalent problems (Pippin, 292–93, n. 38). It would be much more difficult—in my view, impossible—to offer a similar argument with respect to Heidegger's or Derrida's readings of Hegel. But, whether it is possible or not, the point is that Pippin does not do so; and the attitude is not atypical.

Even more crucial is the question of *reading* Hegel, and of reading in general—between the philosophical commentary and what takes place in Heidegger, on the one hand, and Bataille, Deleuze, or Derrida, de Man, and deconstruction, on the other; and one should not hasten here simply to oppose, or, conversely, equate anything. Nor, by the same token, would one deny that, at times even when reading Hegel, all these authors use Hegel, as Hegel himself uses others, in order to foster their own theories or advance their own agendas. To one degree or another, however, such is always the case; and at issue, specifically in deconstruction, is precisely the very possibility and the limits of the self-effacing—content-oriented—philosophical commentary, or philosophical text to begin with, a project that, once again, is not simply erased—How could it be?—even in a deconstructive text, but is radically refigured. Heidegger's reading of Hegel is obviously part of this complex economy.<sup>13</sup> Certainly, none of the poststructuralist authors mentioned here offers a reading any less careful and rigorous, or gives Hegel himself any less credit—more, in fact—for complexity and rigor than Pippin or many others among their critics do. Beyond Derrida's and de Man's encounters, one can use as

examples Jean-Luc Nancy's, Werner Hamacher's, Gasché's, and Warminski's works referred to here, and a number of other recent, and some earlier, studies. Indeed, from Heidegger on, at issue is the complexity and rigor of Hegel and the reading of Hegel. At the same time, a radical critique of Hegel is necessary; and I do not think that in these texts such a critique operates against some unrigorous assumptions or interpretations concerning Hegel's main notions. Pippin's analysis, or "Pippin's Hegel," nowhere diminishes the power of such a critique, however one reads or evaluates Hegel or a given reading of Hegel.<sup>14</sup>

For the reasons just indicated a critique of Hegel may need to be aimed more at a radical undermining of Hegel's economy of consciousness and knowledge than of his economy of history; and it can in fact effectively utilize resources offered by the idea of history in the process. One can, thus, use some strata of Hegel's text against others, as Bataille and Derrida suggest. Simply to identify 'consciousness' [Bewußtsein] and 'knowledge' [Wissen] in Hegel would not be rigorous; analysis is further complicated by the way each concept operates at different levels. One cannot ignore, however, their fundamental interrelatedness in Hegel's text, either, partly—although, of course, not exclusively—by virtue of their common etymology.<sup>15</sup> The succession of chapters in the *Phenomenology* spells out the Hegelian connections and hierarchies. As in the *Phenomenology* and beyond, Hegel's definitions, redefinitions, and elaborations interpenetrate his divisions, new complexities and complicities emerge, both those that are engaged and comprehended by Hegel's own analysis and those that his analysis cannot master.

Self-consciousness is delineated by Hegel with equal rigor and richness, and he refines its dialectic throughout the *Phenomenology* and then in later works. I shall consider the question of self-consciousness in detail in Chapter 6. A few preliminary remarks on the defining aspects of the Hegelian economy of self-consciousness may be in order here, however.

In the *Phenomenology*, the dialectic of master and slave—an extraordinary fusion of the philosophical and the psycho-political economies—developed in the chapter "Self-Consciousness," is of particular relevance and historical importance.<sup>16</sup> As the dialectic of master and slave and the chapter as a whole demonstrate, self-consciousness becomes the economy of *mediation* between a given consciousness and its other, as consciousness.

Hegel's critics often overlook this important point or, rather, given how difficult it is to miss, they do not rigorously discriminate the levels at which exteriority can or cannot be internalized, a failure that often results in Hegelian, or even pre-Hegelian, conceptions. In the absence of *Geist* as the ideal subject, often under the name of 'critique,' everything that constitutes *Geist* in Hegel is retained, often in a more uncritical or dogmatic form than in Hegel himself—in the name of materialism, dialectical or historical, as in Marxism; or in the name of the ethical, as in Levinas; or of the social, the political, or the dialogical, as in Bakhtin.<sup>17</sup>

There is no self-consciousness without exteriority, without otherness, in Hegel, even though otherness, or at least true otherness, is possible only under conditions of self-consciousness. To cite a later formulation of the *Encyclopedia* (no. 424): "*Self-consciousness* is the truth of consciousness and it is its ground, so that within existence, all consciousness of another general object is self-consciousness. I know of the object as its being mine (it is my presentation), therefore, I know of myself within it [Die Wahrheit des Bewußtseins ist das *Selbstbewußtsein*, und dieses der Grund von jenem, so daß in der Existenz alles Bewußtsein eines andern Gegenstandes Selbstbewußtsein ist; ich weiß von dem Gegenstande als dem meinigen (er ist meine Vorstellung), ich weiß daher darin von mir]" (*The Berlin Phenomenology*, 55; *Werke* 10:213; translation modified).

Only by knowing itself as consciousness, only by being conscious of itself as consciousness, is a consciousness or a true knowledge of the other possible, or can the *truth* of consciousness as self-consciousness be achieved. Hegel's conceptual hierarchy is organized around the relationships between exteriority and consciousness. Reason [Vernunft] as a higher form of self-consciousness and self-knowledge is determined by its relation to otherness: "Now that self-consciousness is Reason, its hitherto negative relation to otherness turns round into a positive relation [Damit, daß das Selbstbewußtsein Vernunft ist, schlägt sein bisher negatives Verhältnis zu dem Anderssein in ein positives um]" (*Phenomenology*, 139; *Werke* 3:178).

The economy of Reason as "a positive relation to otherness" must, of course, be seen in relation to Kant. This issue cannot be considered here, and it is *perhaps* not that crucial in the present context. Hegelian specificity, however, is crucial, as is Kantian specificity, of course, whenever the question of Kant's text arises.

Given this specificity, the question of consciousness and knowledge, and particularly of self-consciousness and self-knowledge in Hegel is inconceivable outside the question of exteriority or difference. This drama is elevated to a higher state with each stage of consciousness and knowledge and is finally and fully played out as the tragedy—or comedy—of sacrifice in Absolute Knowledge. Hegelian exteriority, however, remains always grounded in self-consciousness rather than serving as a point of dislocation of all consciousness and all self-consciousness, as in the history of “the unconscious,” leading to *general* economy.

It is a crucial element of Hegel’s economy that knowledge and consciousness are indissociable there, from their common etymology to the most profound conceptual relations between them; and as throughout the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence, before and after Hegel, the Hegelian—restricted economy of consciousness is indissociable from presence and self-presence and just as often grounds the latter as it is grounded in them. As Derrida writes:

But what is consciousness? What does “consciousness” mean? Most often, in the very form of meaning, in all its modifications, consciousness offers itself to thought only as self-presence; as the perception of self in presence. And what holds for consciousness holds here for so-called subjective existence in general. Just as the category of the subject cannot be, and never has been, thought without the reference to presence as *hupokeimenon* or as *ousia*, etc., so the subject as consciousness has never manifested itself except as self-presence. The privilege granted to consciousness therefore signifies the privilege granted to the present. (*Margins*, 16; *Marges* 17)

As we have seen, Hegel, according to Derrida, already “*summed up*” this economy, in part by making it historical, and, against himself, even transgressed its limits (*Of Grammatology*, 24–26).

That is not to say, and Derrida certainly never suggests so, that to conceive of consciousness otherwise, outside the economy of presence, is an easy task. As we have seen, it may well be impossible to do so outside the closure of presence, although once again not necessarily the closure of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. Consciousness, as Freud knew, is a most complex and enigmatic thing, perhaps more complex and enig-

matic than the unconscious.<sup>18</sup> Hegel would in fact agree, albeit for very different reasons. Knowledge is no less enigmatic a concept, as the term has developed historically and has acquired a much wider scope, encompassing, among other things, various concepts of “unconscious” knowledge. But, then, a conscious unconscious or an unconscious consciousness is no longer impossible. Freud, as Lacan reminds us, “has told us that he would have to return—he never did—to the function of consciousness” (*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, 57; *Seminaire XI*, 56; translation modified). Gregory Bateson’s comment is of some interest, too: “Nobody, to my knowledge, knows anything about secondary process [i.e., consciousness]. But it is ordinarily assumed that everybody knows all about it, so I shall not attempt to describe secondary process in any detail, assuming that you know as much about it as I” (*Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 139). Bateson’s usage of “know” may well be ironic here, at least it should be; and Bateson certainly radically questions consciousness and conscious knowledge throughout his writings. For, once again, we do indeed know all this, “we know this a priori, but only now and with a knowledge that is not a knowledge at all” (*Of Grammatology*, 164; *De la grammatologie*, 234). According to Derrida, too: “Above all, it would be necessary to reelaborate a problematic of consciousness, that thing that, more and more, one avoids discussing as if one knew what it is and as if its riddle were solved. But is any problem more novel today than that of consciousness?” (“How to Avoid Speaking: Denials,” 87).

From “Socrates to Freud, and beyond,” via the “uncircumventable” Hegel, configuring *consciousness* remains the major task of theory, particularly the theory of the unconscious. Nietzsche, who often insists on the ultimate insignificance of consciousness, may be an exception, although it goes without saying that Nietzsche’s position is complex on that issue, too: not a dismissal of anything, but a reshaping of the directions of theory and exploring the ever-enriching complexity of all such interactions. Derrida’s elaborations in the essay just cited, particularly on “a conscious being [as] a being capable of lying, . . . a being that can avoid speaking” (“How to Avoid Speaking: Denials,” 87), may in fact be seen as following Nietzsche more than anyone else. It may well be that other, very different names and concepts, or neither names nor concepts, and even different closures are needed.



It may well also be that the great enigma of consciousness—Hegel's great lost war—is what Hegel's text finally offers us. But it can do so only by virtue of what we can offer it—other enigmas, other guesses, other knowledge. It is true that, beginning with the opening elaborations on sense-certainty in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel may help teach us by what “we” may learn, or “will have learned,” “with a knowledge that is not a knowledge at all,” about “us” “here” “now” in Derrida's *Glas*. This knowledge may, for example, be used to deprive, by means of reading Hegel, either Hegel or Derrida or us of all these *properties*, of the proper and “properly belonging” *presence* of “us” “here” and “now.” This lesson may be said to be learned from Hegel. But it equally follows that this knowledge cannot *belong properly* to Hegel—in the classical sense of “proper,” “belonging,” or “presence,” all of which philosophy could claim as property, but never was in possession of. All that has been said only *after*, among others, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Derrida; and in all of them, it is said after a few other things. After all, Derrida's “we will have learned” from Hegel, or “us,” “here,” and “now,” must be read in quotation marks or under Derridean erasure—crossed out but not simply erased or suspended.

This difference must be maintained, even though all these—“us,” “here,” “now”—are *mediated* in Hegel, too. They are not mediated enough, however, certainly not to the degree of general economic mediation at issue in Derrida's *reading* of Hegel or in the question of reading and writing to begin with. It is an old story, perhaps best expressed by Johann Heinrich Lambert in a letter to Kant: “and when the system will be found demonstrated a posteriori, the lovers of Greek literature will come and have no rest until they can prove that the whole system had already been known to Philolaus, Anaximander or some other Greek pundit, and that recently it was only rediscovered and embellished. These are the people who find everything in the ancients, *provided one tells them what they should look for*” (emphasis added).<sup>19</sup>

Old story as it is, it is still an irreducible constraint, at least for “us” “here” “now,” however problematic all these terms, or “before” and “after,” are made. Derrida justly invokes it as a constraint in *The Post Card* (267–68), the text that questions “befores” and “afters,” “here” and “now” as perhaps no other has. What must be said “here” and

“now” is that this (non)exchange of debts or gifts in turn needs a general economy that Bataille in fact relates to the thematics of debt and gift. Under the conditions of the irreducible double binds that, knowingly or not, are engaged by every theory or reading, one must differentiate layers of reading, mis-reading, and the claims that result.

As I have stressed, most specifically in relation to the question of metaphysics as the “metaphysics of presence” in Derrida’s sense—whether being-presence or becoming-presence, unity-presence or multiplicity-presence—no recognition of diversity, or multiplicity of approaches and elaborations in relation to, or as parts and aspects of, the *same* truth or otherwise unified economy of presence can transgress, or transgress to a great enough extent, the limits of the restricted economy.

Nor can any pointing to or emphasizing of this recognition of diversity, multiplicity, or difference in Hegel, Heidegger, or Marx by itself erase the difference between the restricted and the general economy and between corresponding texts. Heidegger’s opening remarks in “My Way to Phenomenology” are revealing in this respect. His philosophical question, perhaps his first, according to this account of 1909–10—“If being is predicated in manifold meanings, then what is its leading fundamental meaning? What does Being mean? [Wenn das Seiende in mannigfacher Bedeutung gesagt wird, welches ist dann die leitende Grundbedeutung?]” (*On Time and Being*, 74; *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 81)—has remained, in this form, the form of *restricted* economy, his guiding question, specifically in *The Question of Being*, and in all his later works.<sup>20</sup>

At issue are the possibility and the necessity of the very concepts of consciousness and knowledge, from Hegel and before, to Freud and after, and how and to what extent such terms and concepts can continue to function in a given text. For, as we have seen, one cannot speak rigorously of consciousness, knowledge, history, or indeed anything in general outside the specific chains of their inscription. In Hegel, too, the generality of concepts is retained only under the conditions of their profound historicity, if in the end it is yet not profound enough or even not *historical* enough. Historicity itself, however, remains Hegel’s great discovery, and it is never given up; either in Hegel’s text as a major conceptual and rhetorical instrument, or *by* this text, at any time *in* history, from “the dawn of knowledge” to Absolute Knowledge.

## The Mediated Immediate and the Closure of History

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is an extraordinary philosophical machine or program, incorporating and generating, as its subprograms, massive and multifaceted philosophical software, such as the philosophy of history. It absorbs the preceding history of philosophy and prepares Hegel's own future work and the subsequent history of philosophy and its closure. As we have seen, however, the book is and must be also, complementarily, a history, specifically but not exclusively the history of philosophy, which latter history, to begin with, cannot be self-contained. The history of philosophy exceeds philosophy, as Hegel perhaps understood, although not to the degree of a general economic understanding of this historical heterogeneity.

As a history, Hegel offers the *Phenomenology* as an unraveling of an enormous and irreducible mediation behind any apparent immediacy, such the immediacy of sense-consciousness, which is Hegel's starting point in the book. He then returns dialectically to a different immediacy—the self-presence of *Geist's* Consciousness to itself—at the end of the book after having inscribed this enormous mediation—History, from “the dawn of knowledge” to Absolute Knowledge. It is only by way of mediation [Vermittlung]—mediation as history [Geschichte]—that one can speak of immediacy and (self)-presence in Hegel. Only through this mediation is the true fullness—plenitude—of immediacy and presence possible; and it can be available only to *Geist*, and in fact only in Absolute Knowledge. There the return to “the *certainty of immediacy*, or *sense-consciousness*—the beginning within which we started [die Gewißheit vom Unmittelbaren . . . oder das *sinnliche* Bewußtsein,—der Anfang, von dem wir ausgegangen]” (*Phenomenology*, 491; *Werke* 3:589–90)—entails the fullness of philosophical and historical knowledge, past and present.

Hegel thus tells us, as it were: “The whole of History, no less, stands behind each *immediate*, immediate perception, immediate sense, or whatever, even though it is not available, cannot be made present to our human consciousness.”

This is a tremendous insight. It also implies the enormous capacity of history and time to *create*, to build up rather than only destroy, which is a

crucial shift of emphasis in intellectual history, even though it cannot be attributed to Hegel alone. Hegelian history, however, is not mediated enough by virtue of its *grounding* in presence, particularly conscious and self-conscious presence—the self-presence of consciousness to itself. From the general economic perspective, all presence, whether as being or becoming, will be seen as an interrupting fiction insofar as it “conceals” a richer economy or efficacy of both presence and rupture. In a general economy, “the play of forces” leads to irreducible inhibition, radically complicating all concepts and oppositions at issue. “The play of forces” is Hegel’s expression, “*das Spiel der Kräfte*,” repeatedly used in the *Phenomenology*, as in the section “Force and the Understanding,” to be considered further in this chapter, and in the dialectic of master and slave (*Phenomenology*, 112; *Werke* 3:147). A general economy, however, disrupts and radically transforms the Hegelian play of forces. More continuous modes and models of presence, whether based on consciousness as in Hegel, or on the unconscious, must be recomprehended as the effects of this all-*inhibiting*, as opposed to all-*encompassing*, and complementary play within a refigured general economic and complementary field.

Such a play can never be fully reduced either to absolute rupture or to full continuity. Immediacy, presence, and continuity are in turn irreducible, hence the necessity of complementarity and corresponding interpretive closures. But they demand a different understanding of their functioning, which must be used *against* all metaphysics of presence—being-presence or becoming-presence, unity-presence or multiplicity-presence, interiority-presence or exteriority-presence—and specifically against dialectic and *Aufhebung*. Both deconstructions of Hegel and Hegelianism, and radically different theoretical economies are thus necessary in order to understand history, mediation, presence, consciousness, the unconscious—indeed everything that Hegel tried to understand, along with much that he refused to understand or consider.

One cannot overemphasize the importance and power of mediation in Hegel. All forms of immediate knowledge, that is, of knowledge and presence *without* mediation, are forms of deception, however much is claimed for them and however natural or logical such claims might seem. Any form of knowledge achieved once and for all without future development is denounced by Hegel, along with knowledge arrived at without mediation, most crucially “without the labor of the negative [*Arbeit des*

Negativen]" (*Phenomenology*, 10; *Werke* 3:24), which enables the *Aufhebung*—negation, preservation, and supersession—of the immediate in mediation.

"Spirit [*Geist*] is this power only by looking negative in the face, and tarrying with it. This tarrying with the negative is the magical power [*Zauberkraft*] that converts it into being. This power is identical with what we earlier called Subject [that is, *Geist*], which by giving determinateness an existence [*Dasein*] in its own element supersedes [*aufhebt*] abstract immediacy, i.e., the immediacy which is merely general, and thus is authentic substance: that being [*Sein*] or immediacy whose mediation is not outside of it but which is this mediation itself. [*Sie ist dasselbe, was oben das Subjekt genannt worden; welches darin, daß es der Bestimmtheit in seinem Elemente Dasein gibt, die abstrakte, d.h. nur überhaupt seiende Unmittelbarkeit aufhebt und dadurch die wahrhafte Substanz ist, das Sein oder die Unmittelbarkeit, welche nicht die Vermittlung außer ihr hat, sondern diese selbst ist.*] (*Phenomenology*, 19; *Werke* 3:36; translation modified)

The question of the Abstract Absolute and of Hegel's critique of Schelling is part of the same critical program; but in general, all immediacy achieved without mediation must be seen as a main target of Hegel's critique. Once mediation, necessarily, emerges behind any immediacy, this targeting is inevitable. Immediacy and presence, in order to be possible, demand mediation, the mediation of the immediate—the continuum. A more detailed analysis of the first three sections of the *Phenomenology*, gathered under the heading "Consciousness," rightly considered crucial by many commentators, would be in order at this point.<sup>21</sup> For the moment, however, I shall comment, by way of illustration, only on the question of 'dogmatism.' The issue holds an extraordinary importance for Hegel, whose contribution to the history of the critique of dogmatic thinking has been one of his greatest achievements.<sup>22</sup> Dogmatic thinking is defined in Hegel by the suspension of mediation of consciousness, as opposed to true thinking, which even—and particularly—when immediate, retains mediation: it knows and retains the history of what it knows. "Dogmatism," Hegel writes in the Preface, "as a way of thinking, whether in ordinary knowing or in the study of philosophy, is nothing else but the opinion that the True consists in a proposition which is a

fixed result or which is immediately known [der unmittelbar gewußt]" (*Phenomenology*, 23; *Werke* 3:41).

In order to achieve the status of true knowledge, then, the immediate must always be placed in an economy of mediation. It is always a question and the necessity of an interval, a continuum rather than a point of knowledge—an interval retained and practiced by knowledge, by virtue of the necessity of confronting the negative. By the same token, Hegel claims the fundamental and fundamentally conscious historicity of knowledge. Full—absolute—continuity and self-consciousness can be achieved only at the level of *Geist* and indeed only in Absolute Knowledge. Mediation itself, however, is crucial to all stages of Hegelian consciousness. The value of any given consciousness, individual or collective, and the quality of thinking and knowledge will be determined by their proximity, as mediation, to the grounding and fundamental mediation—the mediation of *Geist* leading to Absolute Knowledge. Conversely, dogmatic knowledge and other forms of knowledge criticized by Hegel are seen by him as forms of forgetting mediation and thus reflecting the imperfect, if at times necessary, stages of consciousness.<sup>23</sup>

Hegelian mediation, however, and particularly the mediation of, and as, *Geist* as the teleology of Absolute Knowledge must itself have the character of immediacy and presence, both in the sense of the absolute continuity of the process and in the sense of its full and fully conscious presence to itself, its *self*-presence and—and to—*self*-consciousness. One can metaphorize this economy by saying that *Geist* maintains a full self-presence and self-continuity of both temporal and spatial aspects of its continuum, generating a kind of spatio-temporal metaphoric *smooth* topology similar to that of Riemannian-Einsteinian manifolds, as considered earlier. Hegel, of course, engages spatio-temporal considerations both directly and metaphorically, and often very much along these lines; and one must be careful to discriminate between or among different conceptual and metaphorical levels at which such models are operative. Nevertheless, all Hegelian histories and geographies, all his landscapes and all his maps, must be seen as determined by the economy of the mediated immediate at issue here. As Hegel writes in the *Encyclopedia* ("Logic," no. 88): "The notion of Being [der Begriff des Seins], therefore, of which we sometimes speak, must mean Becoming [Werden]; for as Being, it is empty Nothing [das leere Nichts], as that, however, it is empty

Being [das leere Sein]. In Being then we have Nothing, and in Nothing Being; but this Being that stays with itself in Nothing is Becoming" (*Hegel's Logic*, 132; *Die Wissenschaft der Logik, Enzyklopädie, Werke* 8:192; translation modified).<sup>24</sup>

The being of *Geist* is thus always and only becoming; its immediate is always mediated at every level, even, and in particular, at the highest level of Being—Being-Becoming—which is Absolute Knowledge. As Absolute Knowledge, *Geist* acquires the full, absolute, presence and absolute reflection as absolute self-consciousness; but Absolute Knowledge, too, remains a process, a becoming—a continuous reflexive mediation. The conjunction and unity of the immediate presence—the continuum—and reflexivity defines this economy and by implication grounds everything else in Hegel. Hegel's *meditation* on *mediation* aims at establishing a dialectical relation between the immediate and the mediated, and between being and becoming, determined by presence and continuity. Hegelian mediation, however, is also conceived via the economy of self-consciousness and self-reflection, culminating in Absolute Knowledge. That the model that grounds and governs history all along finds its fulfillment in the final product of that history is only consistent with and indeed is necessitated by Hegel's teleology, as it would be by most teleological, or archeological, or teleologico-archeological and utopian economies.

In the *Phenomenology*, in accord with this economy, a full—and according to Hegel, infinite—measure of *Geist's* Becoming and Self-Consciousness, infinite at each point, emerges, as it must, only at the very end, along with Hegel's definition of Absolute Knowledge.<sup>25</sup> The Preface, however, announces much of what is to come, as is only fitting, given its supplementary character, its "afterwordness."<sup>26</sup> Thus Hegel writes:

*The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development.* [Das Wahre ist das Ganze. Das Ganze aber ist nur das durch seine Entwicklung sich vollendende Wesen.] Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*, that only in the *end* is it what it truly is; and that precisely *in this consists its nature*, viz. *to be actual, subject, the becoming of itself* [*Sichselbstwerden*]. Though it may seem contradictory that the Absolute should be conceived essentially as a result, it needs little pondering to set this show

of contradiction in its true light. The beginning, the principle, or the Absolute, as at first immediately enunciated, is only the universal. Just as when I say "*all animals*," this expression cannot pass for zoology, so it is equally plain that the words, "the Divine," "the Absolute," "the Eternal," etc., do not express what is contained in them; and only such words do, in fact [in der Tat], express the intuition [die Anschauung] as something immediate [das Unmittelbare]. Whatever is more than such a word, even the transition to a mere proposition, contains a *becoming-other* [ein Anderswerden] that has to be taken back, it is a mediation [ein Vermittlung]. But it is just this that is rejected with horror, as if absolute cognition [die absolute Erkenntnis] were being surrendered when more is made of mediation than in simply saying that is nothing absolute, and is completely absent in the Absolute.

But this abhorrence in fact stems from ignorance of the nature of mediation, and of absolute cognition itself. For mediation is nothing beyond self-moving selfsameness, or is reflection into self, the moment of the "I" which is for itself pure negativity or, when reduced to its pure abstraction, *simple* [single, undivided] *becoming* [das einfache Werden]. [Denn die Vermittlung ist nichts anderes als die sich bewegende Sichselbstgleichheit, oder sie ist die Reflexion in sich selbst, das Moment des fürsichseienden Ich, die reine Negativität oder, auf ihre reine Abstraktion herabgesetzt, das einfache Werden.] The "I," or becoming in general, this mediation is, in its simplicity, just immediacy in the process of becoming, and is the immediate itself. Reason is, therefore, misconceived [Es ist daher ein Verkennen der Vernunft] when reflection is excluded from the True, and is not grasped as a positive moment of the Absolute. It is reflection that makes the True a result, but it is equally reflection that overcomes the antithesis between the process of its becoming and the result, for this becoming is also simple, and therefore not different from the form of the true which shows itself as *simple* [einfach] in its result; the process of becoming is just this return into simplicity [Einfachheit]. Though the embryo is indeed *in itself* [an sich] a human being, it is not so *for itself* [für sich]; thus it is only as cultivated Reason [gebildete Vernunft], which has *made* itself into what it is *in itself* [an sich]. And that is when it for the first time is actual. [Dies erst ist ihre Wirklichkeit.] But this result is itself a simple [einfach] immediacy, for it is self-conscious freedom at peace with itself, which has not set the



antithesis on one side and left lying there, but has been reconciled with it. [Aber dies Resultat ist selbst einfach Unmittelbarkeit, denn es ist die selbstbewußte Freiheit, die in sich ruht und den Gegensatz nicht auf die Seite gebracht hat und ihn da liegen läßt, sondern mit ihm versöhnt ist.] (*Phenomenology*, 11–12; *Werke* 3:24–26; translation modified, emphasis added)<sup>27</sup>

If every single or simple [einfach] perception must be extended to the whole of history in order to make it possible, every universal category, and above all the Absolute as the most universal, must in turn encompass a huge history and thus a huge differential play. It must be the whole of history: only the *historical* whole is *true*. Otherwise it is not a *true* whole or the “true” Absolute. By that point Hegel had already engaged a critique of the abstract Absolute and Schelling in the famous passage on the Absolute as “the night in which, as the saying goes, all cows are black [die Nacht . . . , worin, wie man zu sagen pflegt, alle Kühe schwarz sind]” (*Phenomenology*, 9; *Werke* 3:22).

This part of the Preface, subtitled “On Scientific Cognition [Vom wissenschaftlichen Erkennen],” could be seen as a critique, in the Kantian sense, of the conception and cognition of the Absolute, its possibility, necessity, and limits.<sup>28</sup> Nietzsche writes on Kant: “Let us recall, secondly, Kant’s tremendous question mark that he placed after the concept of ‘causality’—without, like Hume, doubting its legitimacy altogether. Rather, Kant began cautiously to delimit the realm within which this concept makes sense (and to this day we are not done with this fixing of limits),” before he writes on Hegel: “the astonishing stroke of Hegel, . . . [the] innovation which first introduced the decisive concept of ‘development’ [Entwicklung] into science.” Before Kant and Hegel, there is “First, Leibniz’s incomparable insight that has been vindicated not only against Descartes but against everybody who had philosophized before him—that consciousness is merely an *accident* of experience [*Vorstellung*] and *not* its necessary and essential attribute” (*The Gay Science*, 305, no. 357; KSA 3:598).<sup>29</sup>

Hegel fixes the limits at issue by delimiting Absolute Knowledge as *unlimited*. Nietzsche has a very different agenda, of course, in pointing to the critical potential of these texts. He even refuses to see them as, *philosophically*, German (*The Gay Science*, 305; KSA 3:589). Nietzsche, one

supposes, refuses to see a critical spirit [*Geist*] as the German spirit.<sup>30</sup> Hegel, naturally, is not Nietzsche, and with Kant and in the shadow—or in the sun, the light of reason—of Descartes,<sup>31</sup> he cannot possibly think about ever abandoning consciousness—the *most* “essential attribute of experience.” The only meaningful experience is the experience of consciousness, which defines the concept of experience in Hegel, specifically in the Introduction to the *Phenomenology*. Hegel can proceed only by always thinking a higher and more complete, and finally absolute, consciousness—self-consciousness and its finally absolute self-presence.

By the same token, Hegel’s critique must presuppose or conclude—or both at once—that the Absolute exists, and Hegel proclaims that in the end, only the Absolute truly is. That proclamation could be seen as the defining proposition of idealism, including metaphysical materialism as the idealism of matter. Hegel, however, follows, perhaps to the limit, the demands of this presupposition; and for him the rubric of idealism is nothing to worry about: it defines all true philosophy.<sup>32</sup>

The Absolute as *Geist*, finally as Absolute Knowledge, has no limits. The *human* knowledge of it does: these limits are pursued by Hegel throughout the *Phenomenology*, and subsequent works. This pursuit leads Hegel to the Historical *Geist* as mediation culminating in Absolute Knowledge and to a corresponding reconfiguration of the *Subject*, *Self*, and all other Hegelian determinations.

Under these conditions, the truth of the Absolute can only be the whole, in the sense that it is the truth of the Absolute as History—its “becoming of itself [*Sichselbstwerden*]”—culminating in Absolute Knowledge. The latter, then, will be assigned the infinite future history, infinite future knowledge-becoming. Once devoid of their historical content, grand conceptions such as the Absolute become *meaning-less*, devoid of *true* meaning. They would be equally meaningless devoid of the conscious and self-conscious, and reflexive character of mediation and history. Following *Geist*, one must, at least at advanced stages of knowledge such as philosophy, continuously reflect on everything one does and thinks. One must know what one does and what one knows. This, as it may be called, principle of reflexivity leads Hegel and philosophy before and after him to various forms and complex hierarchies of reflection, in Hegel culminating in Absolute Reflection.<sup>33</sup>

Human scientific cognition—that is, philosophy—is itself made possi-

ble by the scientificity of *Geist* as Science [Wissenschaft], which human philosophy follows—up to a point. The abstract Absolute has been a stage in *Geist*'s knowledge of itself and thus a conception of *Geist*-Science before human philosophy has arrived at this understanding. The latter now must be superseded by human philosophy as well. As human knowledge, philosophy thus must be the phenomenology of *Geist*—the science of the appearance of *Geist*—as *Geist* itself will move beyond the limit of Phenomenology, specifically to Logic—the science of the truth of *Geist*—and then to Absolute Knowledge [das absolute Wissen], which may exceed the limits of all science [Wissenschaft]. These transitions and interrelations are complex. Logic and phenomenology interpenetrate each other. Absolute Knowledge, even if it exceeds both, is also an *Aufhebung* and thus conserves them; and it can exceed philosophy only along the gradient of philosophy. Absolute Knowledge, as will be seen, is also a knowledge beyond “the limit,” beyond all limitation, either in its local or its global economy.<sup>34</sup> This limit, or this “beyond the limit,” is inaccessible to any human knowledge. Even the limits of Science as *Geist* are already inaccessible to human philosophy. Philosophy, as a human cognition of *Geist*, can only have a limited knowledge of *Geist*. Thus, human philosophy may be seen as always remaining a phenomenology, dealing only with the “appearance” of and the difference from *Geist* and its truth, rather than with *Geist* and its truth as such—the encounter possible only for *Geist* itself.<sup>35</sup> But human philosophy, at least Hegel's, knows—or claims to know—that *Geist*'s true knowledge is the whole and is unlimited.

As Hegel's analysis progresses, at once both very rapidly and very slowly, *Aufhebung*—here *Aufhebung* enacted by reflection—makes its appearance in the passage from the Preface just cited, in order to overcome the antithesis [Gegensatz]: “It is reflection that makes the True a result, but it is equally reflection that overcomes the antithesis between the process of its becoming and the result [Sie (die Reflexion) ist es, die das Wahre zum Resultate macht, aber diesen Gegensatz gegen sein Werden ebenso *aufhebt*]” [emphasis added]. According to Hegel, “this result is itself a simple [einfach] immediacy,” although it remains a *complex mediation*, too. It is at once both being and becoming, being and non-being, being and nothing, or possibly neither, thus, to a degree, but only to a degree, anticipating the general economic radical difference.

*Einfach*, which Hegel uses throughout, is actually “simple” in the sense of “single,” *undivided*—an undividedness or, in the terms suggested earlier, the global connectivity of an immensely complex structure. While Hegel says here that it “needs a little pondering,” he seems to have pondered it all his life. For “the immediate itself” is “the immediacy in the process of *becoming*”—“the becoming immediacy [die werdende Unmittelbarkeit].” “In its simplicity [Einfachheit],” Hegel says. But this is only so because all other—external—concerns of this “I,” this ultimate—absolute—self-consciousness, insofar as they can be seen as external, are reduced. This is a process of enormous complexity, however; and it would have to have a very long history, indeed, at each point, a longer history than Hegel allows for. It needs a *différance* at each point. Hegel spends many pages in the *Phenomenology* and beyond trying to figure it, without ever quite succeeding. “Simple” thus is really *self-presence*, *presence to itself*; and simplicity [Einfachheit] is the full self-concern of this I—the I of *Geist*, finally as Absolute Knowledge.

*Aufhebung* emerges early in Hegel as the economy of *consumption*; and it will, at every level conceivable, remain such throughout Hegel’s text, in the *Phenomenology* and beyond. This economy, definitionally restricted, may be said to be the ultimate economy of “conspicuous consumption” as *absolute* consumption: “*the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development* [Das Ganze aber ist nur das durch seine Entwicklung sich vollendende Wesen].”

The essence will, thereby, be identified with the Subject-*Geist*. History, as proper or authentic history, is by definition that which contributes to the result—the final continuum of Absolute Knowledge. History, therefore, is that which will be retained in *Geist*’s absolute and absolutely conscious memory, while everything else is discarded in the course of history as that which does not properly belong, which is not properly, authentically, or truly historical. This separation into that which is authentically historical or otherwise authentic and that which is not is a classical gesture, persisting well beyond Hegel, if often in his shadow, as in Heidegger’s analysis of “Temporality and Historicity” in *Being and Time* (pt. 2, ch. 5). As ideology, it has also had enormous political implications throughout modern history.

In Hegelian mediation as the mediation of the immediate, the continuum of becoming and reflexivity are thus always interactive. Hegel com-

bines them, defining the becoming of *Geist* through its fundamental concern with itself. Consciousness and the conscious continuum can only be full or absolute in the form of absolute *self*-consciousness. That conjunction is demanded interactively by the necessity of conscious determination—determination *by* consciousness—and by what may be seen as the topology of the Hegelian continuum. As shall be seen, Hegel's economy of infinity still follows the Newtonian model of the infinite Absolute Space and Absolute Time, even though it also attempts, to a degree successfully, to recomprehend this model.

This possibility of full presence to a totality is already predicated on the general possibility of the continuum as a model. Hegel does not fully explicate the latter model as such. Rather, as Althusser was perhaps first to suggest, the continuum *underlines* or *underwrites*, also in Derrida's sense of writing, Hegel's economy of the historical. The model of the continuum, in general and in specific Hegelian form, is crucial because it *continues* to operate elsewhere, both within classical or, complementarily, general economic models. It is our *continuity* with Hegel and philosophy. It continues to function in the absence of Absolute Knowledge but, in the classical models, in the presence of comparable claims on history, theory, psychology, or politics.

The Hegelian reflection, as "a *positive* moment of the Absolute," enacts *Aufhebung* as conserving, while negating what might be lost otherwise. It enables and ensures the possibility of the economy of Being as Becoming "which does not *lose* itself in Nothingness" and which in the end, in Absolute Knowledge, makes the True a result and the whole. Without this aspect of the conserving *Aufhebung* of reflection, as the *positive* moment of negation, knowledge would be continuously lost in becoming, in the Heraclitean flux.<sup>36</sup> The conscious character of the Hegelian becoming-continuum is crucial since Absolute Knowledge must achieve full presence in its consciousness of all transformations and of all history. Absolute Knowledge must emerge as the absolute totality, along with absolute continuity. Everything worthy of History should be *present* to it, belong to it, be part of its Self—all past and all present.

Other forms of the continuum are conceivable in and explored by Hegel throughout his work, particularly, in addition to the *Phenomenology*, in the first *Logic*, the *Encyclopedia*, and the *History of Philosophy*. They would include, for example, any conscious but incomplete contin-

uum, or the unconscious continuum, or a configuration of continuums that are not continuously and consciously integrated into a unified continuum—in fact all customary forms of human experience. But insofar as they are *not* recognized and treated as such, specifically in order to overcome them to the greatest extent possible, they are seen by Hegel as forms of deception, as are, for example, various forms of dogmatic knowledge. Such experiences would not be true “experiences of consciousness” [die Erfahrung des Bewußtseins].

Always falling short of such an experience, the experience of human consciousness and knowledge must strive to achieve the degree of proximity to this experience that is available to it. No human consciousness can attain full consciousness, and its continuums will have different, always ruptured, topologies, that are also more limited in their capacity for wholeness and presence. As will be seen in Chapter 5, there are moments or intervals of human experience—limited continuums—that are analogous to and may well have been among Hegel’s models of the ultimate experience of the continuum and consciousness. The authenticity of the human experience of consciousness is defined only by its *proximity* to, never identity with, the experience of the Self-Consciousness of *Geist*. In this sense, the human mind will always retain a kind of unconscious in Hegel, even when it participates, as it must, in *Geist*’s History and finally in Absolute Knowledge. Similarly, the interaction between human subjects, at its best, could approach the integration of disconnected, discontinued continuums into a unity—a conscious and, as it were, mutually self-conscious unity; but this integration can never quite be fulfilled. There can be no full communication in this sense, either between human subjects or between human subjects and *Geist*, although *Geist* has the full knowledge of its human subjects, who thus “communicate” with it.

The only true communication is thus *Geist*’s communication and communion with itself. The best rendition of it is perhaps still the communication and communion between God and his beloved Son in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*—a text no doubt known to Hegel and similar to Hegel in its attempt to consider how such things can be possible and in its attempt to think “things unattempted yet in Prose and Rhyme” (Book 1, l. 16).<sup>37</sup> Hegel, naturally, would consider that such things can only be attempted in Prose—Prose with a capital *P*, the Prose of Philosophy. The dialectic of master and slave is fulfilled only at the level of *Geist*. *Geist* thus is the only

master possible in full measure. Full self-consciousness demands much infinity and much presence, in fact the infinite presence, if nothing is to be lost to the nothingness of becoming. The final, absolute self-consciousness of *Geist* in Absolute Knowledge thus ensures the unity and continuity of history and the possibility of controlling its transformations. Absolute Knowledge is a realization or, rather, a claim of a realization of the model that, in the shadow of Hegel, has in one way or another conditioned much of the theory and practice of history, historiography, or politics.<sup>38</sup>

In the end, nothing will be lost for *Geist*, nothing worth preserving, no event of history, whether a thought, a deed, or anything else. Prior to attaining Absolute Knowledge, *Geist* is not fully in possession, at least not in conscious possession, of all this past knowledge, which might thus be seen, along Freudian lines, as being put in reserve [Vorrat]—a kind of unconscious history-memory trace of knowledge that becomes utilized along the way as new knowledge is produced. As I shall discuss in more detail later, *Geist*'s activity cannot perhaps be seen merely or only as a recovery of some old knowledge—already present, already there—but rather as a becoming that is always a production of new knowledge. In Absolute Knowledge as the overcoming of all unconscious and the recovery of all losses, the becoming and production of knowledge are at any moment fully conscious and fully self-conscious. *Geist* as Absolute Knowledge possesses the total and fully conscious memory trace. The Absolute in Hegel is thus indeed essentially “the result [Resultat],” for “it is only in the *end*,” as Absolute Knowledge, that the Absolute “is,” (self-)consciously, “what it is truly is.” Only in the end is it fully—and fully consciously—present to itself with all its present and all its past, even as it continues to generate new knowledge. Although representing a utopian vision, this economy relates to complex intellectual, psychological, and social processes; and one should be careful not to oversimplify Hegel's thinking in this respect. I shall consider these issues in more detail in the next chapter.

What Hegel wants is clearly a kind of fully conscious memory. It is memory without the unconscious, and without forgetting,<sup>39</sup> fully organized and fully structured. One might see it as short-term memory made into long-term memory. The distinction itself, however, loses its significance in Absolute Knowledge, which always knows the whole of its past

and all of its present, if perhaps not its entire future. It has no unconscious: it does not forget and it does not sleep, and it does not slip, as the Freudian unconscious does; in fact it does not make mistakes of any kind. It is the ultimate *dream* of theory. To reduce all that inhibits presence and the becoming of presence, to reduce all the unconscious would indeed require an enormous, absolute degree of consciousness and self-consciousness, and absolute and absolutely conscious memory. Memory thus becomes a model for *Geist* and History. The word Hegel uses in relation to the Historical *Geist* is “die Erinnerung”—recollection—without which no historical *Aufhebung* and thus no history would be possible.

The relationships between *Geist* and the human mind are complex, but the question and the concept of memory have a central significance in Hegel. The rendition just given obviously depends on the Freudian, or post-Freudian, matrix of mental processes and memory. But this post-Hegelian matrix in turn might be seen as post-*Hegelian*. Hegel is a crucial sign-post in this postal circulation, as Derrida, in “The Pit and the Pyramid,” suggests specifically in relation to memory.<sup>40</sup> Freud’s relationships to his precursors are more complex, both with respect to influence and to recognition. The latter type of relationship is perhaps a more interesting question in the case of Nietzsche, the thinker of the unconscious, than of Hegel, the thinker of consciousness. In Freud’s writing on history, however, he, as shall be seen, remains quite Hegelian.

Hegelian mediation-history thus has a very specific nature:

*First*, Absolute Knowledge, which is the final product of this mediation-history, emerges at the same time as a certain, indeed absolute, *immediate*—the absolute *presence* and the becoming-presence. Conversely, determined by and determining its historical and transformational character, Hegelian immediacy is the immediacy of and *in* mediation—the continuum of becoming-presence. The structural mathematics, as it were, of this joint economy is elaborated in its fullest form in the first *Logic*. While the process is fulfilled only in Absolute Knowledge of the *Phenomenology* or analogous economies of Absolute Spirit or the Idea in later works, it constitutes a model that grounds, governs, and is fulfilled in this teleology, defining the Hegelian historical process [Geschichte]. In Derrida’s words, “History—which according to Hegel is always the history of the spirit—is the development of the concept [i.e.,



Begriff] as logos, and the ontotheological unfolding [le déploiement ontothéologique] of parousia" (*Margins*, 95; *Marges*, 111). History is thus figured by Hegel in a restricted economy or the metaphysics of presence and the continuum as the line [*grammē*], or more precisely, a continuous manifold. For all Hegelian topologies are best seen as those of multiplicities or manifolds, close to the Riemannian model discussed earlier.

*Second*, in this teleology of Absolute Knowledge, everything that authentically belongs to mediation and history is necessarily determined by *reflexivity*. Hegelian History is the history of, and *as*, self-reflexive mediation.

As a result, the fundamental conjunction of historicity and consciousness in Hegel acquires its ultimate form: a conjunction and synthesis or *Aufhebung* of a specific form of historicity—the becoming as a conscious presence, the conscious continuum—and a specific, highest, form of consciousness—a form of self-consciousness, finally absolute self-consciousness. Only in this final synthesis do both—Historicity and Consciousness—become fully possible and make each other possible, as they are elevated [*aufgehoben*] to the absolute Becoming and absolute Self-Consciousness.

"To equate [*auszugleichen*] its *self-consciousness* with its *consciousness*" (*Phenomenology*, 486; *Werke* 3:583), Hegel states in the final chapter, "Absolute Knowledge [*das absolute Wissen*]," is the task of *Geist* as Science [*Wissenschaft*] and History. However dialectical, Science alone, as Science, is neither historical nor dialectical enough to deliver that equation, which entails the—absolute—equation of *Geist* and the Notion [*der Begriff*], as the latter in turn becomes Absolute Notion [*der absolute Begriff*]. Without this identification Absolute Knowledge cannot appear and fulfill both aspects of presence and plenitude at stake: the fullness, plenitude, presence, of knowledge's knowledge about itself and the absolute reduction of all other concerns of the Hegelian Subject—*Geist*.

The economy just described may be called the Historical *Self-Consciousness*; and it will be maintained throughout Hegel's text, from the *Phenomenology* on, finally as the dialectic of the Idea in later works. In the *Phenomenology* it emerges fully at the moment of the final reduction of difference in the last chapter where, as he moves through his spirals,

corridors, and labyrinths, Hegel finally reaches this new beginning—the beginning of History as Absolute Knowledge.

As I have stressed throughout, this *reduction* of difference, even in Absolute Knowledge, takes place by way of difference, exteriority, transformation. In pursuing mediation, Hegel inscribes a *play* of differences and transformations. This aspect of the Hegelian economy cannot be overlooked without severely crippling the force of Hegel's analysis. By the same token, however, it figures only a controlled transformational play, making it into a restricted economy. The control constitutes a crucial defining—if not *the* defining—moment of Hegelianism.

The difference between the Hegelian economy as restricted economy and general economy is thus determined by the *structure* of the economy of transformations. The control of interpretation and history as transformational play by *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge in Hegel, or by other transcendental structures elsewhere, must be opposed to the radical indeterminacy of the general economy and complementarity, as against dialectical unity and synthesis—*Aufhebung*. One must rigorously but radically suspend the control of indeterminacy or—as Derrida suggests in his analysis of Kant in “Economimesis”—at best of “*controlled* indeterminacies” (3; emphasis added) as itself a fundamental *determination* of philosophy. This economy culminates in Heideggerian play, defined in *The Question of Being* as “a play which, the more richly it unfolds, the more strictly it is held (within the domain governed) by a hidden rule [Regel].” Simultaneously, what is said in accordance with, or *properly belonging* to, this play “remains ‘bound into’ the highest law [Gesetz]”:

The meaning-fulness [Mehrdeutigkeit]<sup>41</sup> of what is said [die Sage] by no means consists in a mere accumulation of meanings [Bedeutungen] emerging haphazardly. This meaning-fulness is based on a play [Spiel] which, the more richly it unfolds, the more strictly it is held (within the domain governed) by a hidden rule [Regel]. Through (the presence of) this rule, this meaning-fulness plays within the balance(d), whose oscillation we seldom experience. That is why what is said remains “bound into” the highest law [Gesetz]. That [this being bound into the highest law] is the freedom that “frees into” the all-playing structure [Gefüge: juncture] of never-resting transformations [Verwandlung].

[Die Mehrdeutigkeit der Sage besteht keineswegs in einer bloßen An-

häufung beliebig auftauchender Bedeutungen. Sie beruht in einem Spiel, das, je reicher es sich entfaltet, um so strenger in einer verborgenen Regel gehalten bleibt. Durch diese spielt die Mehrdeutigkeit im Ausgewogenen, dessen Schwingung wir selten erfahren. Darum bleibt die Sage ins höchste Gesetz gebunden. Das ist die Freiheit, die in das allspielende Gefüge, der nie ruhenden Verwandlung befreit.] (*The Question of Being*, 104–5; translation modified)

It is not, of course, that the interpretive or even the philosophical process can in fact be so determined, or in general can be determined in the way philosophy wants to determine interpretation and itself. At issue thus is the desire of or necessity for philosophy, or other forms of restricted economy, so to determine itself and its history, and to determine all authentic history and historicity, however much the structures themselves of determination may vary in different systems—such as *Geist* in Hegel, Capital in Marx, or Being in Heidegger. In Hegel's, Marx's, Heidegger's, and other restricted economies, a *degree* of indeterminacy, at times considerable, is allowed to the human mind, history, or culture. Evaluated by the superior philosophical knowledge, none of these agencies ranks as good enough. The human mind may conform more closely to the truth or, as a lesser—specifically, lesser than philosophical—mind tends to do, may deviate from the truth, but it will always be subject to the governing transcendental structure—a transcendental signified or signifier, in Derrida's sense. Such a transcendental signified, while it may, as in Heidegger, itself be inaccessible to and unnameable by the human mind, governs, controls, and determines everything (*Of Grammatology*, 20).

In the name of difference and history, and in the name of the difference of history, Hegelianism and ensuing conceptions and models of history are in the end always based on the reduction of difference in presence. That reduction may take the form of being or becoming or an interaction between them, or it may be accomplished by other determinations accompanying them—psychological, social, theoretical, political, or other. This economy, by definition restricted, of the control of differential play defines the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. Hegel has perhaps defined its limits more fully than anyone else from within the field of metaphysics.

Bataille and Derrida brilliantly grasp that what the Hegelian econ-

omy offers is an economy of consumption and profit, without loss in (self-)presence, and thus in fact the economy of pleasure, always defined by the economy of presence, however much such a restricted economy, whether Hegelian or other, may claim to suspend pleasure or try to subject it to the economy of the proper. As the metaphysics of presence, the restricted economy is always defined either by the claim of the full retention of presence or, conversely, by a nostalgic relation to the absolute loss of or in presence.<sup>42</sup> These two economies may be seen as metaphysically equivalent or codetermined by an overt or implicit claim of present pleasure, or past-present—or present-past—nostalgic pleasure. The general economy does not discount the possibility of pleasure of, or as, presence. But, in contrast to a restricted economy, it does not assign unequivocal priority to presence or gain as opposed to absence or loss, or certain, such as nostalgic, types of gain-loss against others. Rather, it demands the complementarity of all such relations.

With *Aufhebung* as a synthesis without loss or uncontrolled loss, *Geist* conserves all that it is necessary to conserve and discards all that must be discarded. Hegelian *Geist* becomes a perfect—absolute—digestive system, able to utilize all its energy. It is against this possibility of absolute consumption and this subjectivity that Bataille's "interior [or inner] experience" is set—where losing much, even everything, in nothingness, negatively or affirmatively, with or without nostalgia, is by no means excluded.

This possibility in turn prepares and conditions the general economy of *différance* in Derrida. Bataille's "interior experience is above all not interior [cette expérience n'est surtout pas intérieure]" and perhaps is not an experience, certainly not the experience of consciousness (*Writing and Difference*, 272; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 400). Nor is it "immediate," but, rather, is more radically *mediated*, insofar as Hegelian terms can be used, although as Bataille observed, Hegel, in whose "mind that which is immediate is bad, . . . would identify what [Bataille] call[s] experience as the immediate" (*Erotism*, 235; *L'Erotisme*, 281; translation modified).

Perhaps any restricted economy is bound to see such an experience as the immediate, because it misses the radical, and radically unconscious, mediation, if the latter term can still be used, and places it within the restricted economy of mediation as the continuum. This perspectival necessity in general poses the question of reading Bataille's text, or Nietz-

sche's and Derrida's, or other general economic texts and styles as plural style, which are bound to be missed by a restricted economy of reading, as Derrida specifically demonstrates in his reading of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche in *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*.

The polysemy entailed by the *Aufhebung*—"the speculative concept par excellence, . . . the concept whose untranslatable privilege is wielded by the German language" (*Writing and Difference*, 257; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 377–78)—is a restricted economy in either sense, restricted above to all to the production-consumption of meaning, and thus containing its heterogeneity and indeterminacy, whether in writing or reading. By contrast, "[interior experience] does not pleasurably consume an absolutely close presence, and, above all, it cannot enter into the movement of mediation, as can the Hegelian immediate [Elle ne jouit pas d'une présence absolument proche et surtout elle ne peut, comme l'immédiat hegelien, entrer dans le mouvement de la médiation]" (*Writing and Difference*, 273; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 402).<sup>43</sup>

The latter qualification is extremely important. First of all, insofar as mediation can be engaged, it is not, except within refigured limits, the Hegelian mediation of the immediate, but is instead the mediation determined by the unconscious, loss, radical exteriority and multiplicity, and other general economic forces. Second, one must also relate to a "difference" or "exteriority" that cannot be subsumed under any *given* form of mediation, or difference and exteriority, or designated by any given name; and we cannot speak of such notions in general outside their specific frameworks or inscriptions. Conceived via this general economy, Bataille's interior experience thus relates to the possibility and, under certain conditions, the necessity of losing Being in nothingness—"under certain conditions," for, under different conditions, conservation is also possible and may be necessary. Loss and conservation, or accumulation, must thus be understood as complementary. In Hegel, history is the economy of consumption, but consumption in turn demands history. Perhaps consumption, like loss, demands even *more* history—more than Hegelian history. It certainly demands more—or simultaneously along different lines, more and less—than consciousness and self-consciousness.

In Absolute Knowledge, historicity *as* structure retains its centrality. The end, the *result* is *not* a moment, a point, an end, but a process—mediation, becoming, development, history. Absolute Knowledge is me-

diation and is the beginning of the highest mediation—from this moment on as the fully self-conscious *Geist*. Like all beginnings, this beginning cannot be left without qualifications. For Hegel, however, the thinker in the grand style, the end can only be a new beginning, the beginning of the best history yet. All history notwithstanding, Hegel looks into the future, not the past. Contrary to the common view of Hegel, the end and the completion of history may not be a Hegelian moment, either in the *Phenomenology* or in later works, specifically the first *Logic* and the *Encyclopedia*.<sup>44</sup> ‘Beginning’ may not be the correct term, since, in a certain sense, this history—history as the teleology of Absolute Knowledge—has always already begun.<sup>45</sup> More generally, whether it concerns the history of philosophy—or the philosophy of history—Hegel, while he at times speaks of beginnings, offers no more a simple possibility of beginning than of an end.

One of the reasons for this suspension of the beginning, or of the end, is the extraordinary rigor of Hegel’s thinking, its refusal to compromise this rigor of analysis, even for the sake of some of his major principles. Of course, Hegel is unwilling to give up those major principles, either, hence the richness of the conflictual possibilities his text offers, whether along classical or deconstructive lines.<sup>46</sup> One continuously encounters moments of transition and what Heidegger refers to as “not yet” (*Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, 33) or Derrida as the moments of “almost” (*Glas*, 218–20).<sup>47</sup>

The Hegelian *closure* (re)figures History as the teleology of Absolute Knowledge, by defining History by way of the true or the proper “belonging” to that teleology. History itself enters its final, but interminable, phase with the appearance of Absolute Knowledge. Only in Absolute Knowledge does the whole of History appear as the whole, as the historical continuum of *Geist*, which from this moment in its development becomes free of all inhibition. This end or this beginning is not discontinuous with respect to preceding history. On the contrary, Hegel’s logic remains the logic of the continuum throughout, and without “the labor [die Arbeit]” of preceding History, this final *Aufhebung* and “the result”—the final becoming—it produces would not be possible. Absolute Knowledge conserves all of its past even though it transforms and supersedes. Conversely, History, or rather what is proper to it, must be seen all along as the teleology of Absolute Knowledge, superseding itself

by both negating and conserving in one *Aufhebung* after another, without any loss or waste at every stage. This process—the history of *Geist* itself as the teleology of Absolute Knowledge—conditions and makes possible World History, in which, as we have seen, the life of *Geist* has an objective existence but cannot be contained by it.

One cannot underestimate, however, the extraordinary theoretical power of, let us say, the “form” of Hegelian process, where, as opposed to other general teleologies, philosophical and thus theoretical knowledge plays a decisive role. Localizing this economy and refiguring it as general, one may read Hegel’s Absolute Knowledge as suggesting that once a new general paradigm, such as Hegelian philosophy, Nietzschean matrix, the Freudian psychoanalysis, Bataille’s general economy, or Derrida’s deconstruction is in place, the preceding history of theory becomes reinterpreted throughout, from the very beginning. Derrida describes this process by suggesting that *writing* has always already begun in *Of Grammatology* (4) and *Positions* (13–14). One should not lose sight of the differences, both in the general description of the process at issue and in relation to Derrida’s comments. In this sense, it may be said that, to use his own comment on Bataille, Derrida utilizes “an *empty* form [*la forme vide*] of the *Aufhebung*” (*Writing and Difference*, 275; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 406). In the first place, the general difference between the restricted and the general economy of all such processes is at issue; these processes therefore cannot be subjected to any form of Hegelian teleology, particularly as the teleology of truth, consciousness, presence, a fully unified field of knowledge, and so forth. Derrida’s *general* economy of writing is a major and decisive contribution to our understanding of the field of this difference between the restricted and general economy, even if—and to the degree that—a certain trace of globalization and teleology of the closure of metaphysics as considered earlier can be detected in Derrida.

Absolute Knowledge is a fully conscious and self-conscious process—the continuum, which never stops. But then, it is not human and, being infinite, can afford this luxury of incessant thinking, the pleasure of unlimited intellectual consumption. Absolute Knowledge is presence in intellectual becoming—the ultimate fulfillment of the philosophical dream, which in fact makes the uninterrupted, ever-present consumption of intellectual pleasure possible as well. This uninterrupted pleasure is reserved only for Absolute Knowledge and its history, however, indeed only for its

future history. For “the end of the book,” whether the *Phenomenology*, the first *Logic*, or the *Encyclopedia*, does not quite determine where *Geist* or actual history [wirkliche Geschichte] stands at the moment.

The question of the possibility of the completeness of knowledge under these conditions—the infinite future history of knowledge and Absolute Knowledge—requires further qualifications, and I shall elaborate on this overall economy in the next chapter. Briefly, Hegel is attempting to conceive of a continuum of consciousness and knowledge that is complete and fully self-conscious and self-present to itself, and thus is without any loss in cognition and presence at any given moment. But it also continues in this manner infinitely into the future. Nothing less than infinity would suffice for *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge. In this sense, Hegelian infinitude, while it has a quality of local infinity as well—the quality of intensive continuum—would in full rigor prohibit the end of history, or at least the end of process, mediation, and becoming. The final process—the result-process—may, of course, be read as no longer historical, as the end of history as it was previously operative and thus, while a process, a-historical. In the present reading, Hegel never gives up the historicity of the process; in fact, it is the possibility of history that makes Absolute Knowledge possible, since it also entails *Aufhebung* and thus, along with negation and supersession, the retention and conservation of all past history as history (*Phenomenology*, 492–93; *Werke* 3:590–91).

This impossibility of reducing the infinite, indeed the infinity of higher magnitude—the magnitude of the “line” as against discrete or striated magnitudes, such as those of natural or rational numbers—in any interval characterizes the mathematical continuum as magnitude, not as “smoothness,” although the smooth manifolds, such as lines, are natural examples of such higher magnitudes. This model, “the model of the line” as Derrida calls it (*Of Grammatology*, 86), would thus be operative in Hegel, finally making the Hegelian economy of history and, and as, self-consciousness problematic. One should be careful, however, to differentiate the Hegelian infinite from, among other things, the mathematical infinite, in part in order to understand the problematic nature of the Hegelian model, or similarly, the Husserlian or Heideggerian transcendental model. The distinction is necessary, above all, in view of the economy of self-consciousness engaged by Hegel. Hegel offers a remarkably well-informed analysis of various mathematical conceptions of the infi-



nite, specifically in differential calculus, in "Quantum" in the first *Logic*. Mathematical infinity, according to Hegel, must be rigorously distinguished from the true—that is, Hegelian—infinity. Yet, Hegel's economy of the nonmathematical continues to depend upon certain, and specifically continuous, mathematical models, which control his economies and make them problematic.

The core of the Hegelian process is the underlying economy of the continuum that conditions much of the post-Hegelian history of philosophy, especially the history of the idea of history. In Hegel, this process is claimed to be *realized* in the ideal *reality* of *Geist*; doubtless it could be postulated as being realized otherwise. It may be seen as an asymptotic model without ever being realized. It may also attach itself, in a hidden fashion, to an economy that aims to attack or even destroy Hegel and Hegelianism, including in all aspects just listed. Or it may function still otherwise. To a degree, such economies must operate in a critical or deconstructive text as well, such as Nietzsche's, Bataille's, or Derrida's. The latter, however, must reinscribe the functioning of presence, first by means of the unconscious and then in a general economy, where presence can no longer enjoy the grand status accorded to it by philosophy but must function otherwise. Of course, this economy of presence and the continuum has characterized a great deal of pre-Hegelian history of philosophy, on to which Hegel's conceptions depend. But in Hegel, and in the shadow of Hegel, it has acquired crucial new dimensions. History has become a dream, or a nightmare from which to awaken may neither be possible nor sufficient, if one should want a better theory of history and perhaps also a better practice, including political practice.

Hegelian History thus becomes perhaps the greatest and historically most significant paradigmatic case of a historicist teleological utopia or, again, a kind of machine or program generating such utopian visions—the vision of a perfect ideal, history awaiting the end of history as one knows it now, that is, at the moment when one offers a utopian vision. It may refer, for example, to the history after a revolution, or during a revolution, enacting a permanent revolution. It may also be an ideal that no longer conforms to history—a liberation from history, an awakening from its nightmare.

While many other more recent cases may be invoked, such as Deleuze and Guattari's utopia of liberating schizophrenia, the Marxist model may

remain the most important version of this utopia. Deleuze and Guattari's vision pointedly depends on it, supplementing it by the radical and, as the authors claim, Nietzschean unconscious. The two—a utopian and a Nietzschean, general economic, unconscious—cannot coexist, however, making Deleuze and Guattari's model of history and the unconscious problematic, partly by virtue of its grounding in a form of continuum utopia of multiplicity as considered earlier. In Marxism, erasing the ideal, or the idealist Hegelian Subject, *Geist*, as the efficacy of all history and reversing Hegel's dialectic, "putting it from its head on its feet," as Marx said, this model is fully grounded in actual history [die wirkliche Geschichte] and is given a material, or materialist, politico-economic base. As considered earlier, however, this "reversal" does not make the model any less problematic, even if one suspends fully, or modifies in one way or another, the utopian aspect of the configuration, as has been done at times in the history of Marxism. In a certain sense, this reversal makes things more problematic insofar as one wants to retain material history. The impossible ideal—the Hegelian Subject, *Geist*—may be a necessary condition of dialectical history as a historical teleology of consciousness. Kojève's elaborations on the end of history in Hegel, referred to earlier, are finally aligned more closely with Hegel than with Marx. They produce one of the best-known and most influential readings of that type, extending its impact throughout the French intellectual scene, certainly to Bataille's but also Deleuze's, and perhaps even Derrida's, views of Hegel and their own theories.

Hegel's phenomenology, following *Geist-Science* [*Geist-Wissenschaft*], arrives at the revelation of this impossible result, this inevitable appearing of Absolute Knowledge, or rather, a threshold of Absolute Knowledge. In the Preface, Hegel reformulates the propositions cited earlier in terms of "purposive activity [zweckmäßige Tun]":

What has just been said can also be expressed by saying that Reason is *purposive activity*. The exaltation of a supposed Nature over a misconceived thinking, and especially the rejection of external teleology [äußere Zweckmäßigkeit], has brought the form of purpose in general into discredit. Still, in the sense in which Aristotle, too, defines Nature as purposive activity, purpose is what is immediate and *at rest*, the unmoved which is also *self-moving*, and as such is Subject [der Zweck ist das

Unmittelbare, *Ruhende*, das Unbewegte, welches *selbst bewegend* ist; so ist es *Subjekt*]. Its power to move, taken abstractly, is *being-for-itself* or pure negativity. The result is the same as the beginning, only because the *beginning* is the *purpose*; in other words, the actual is the same as its Notion [Begriff] only because the immediate, as purpose, contains the self or pure actuality within itself. *The realized purpose, or the existent actuality, is the movement and unfolded becoming; but it is just this unrest that is the self*; and the self is like that immediacy and simplicity of the beginning because it is the result, that which has returned into itself, being in this self-return just the self; and the self is the sameness and simplicity that relates itself to itself. [Der ausgeführte Zweck oder das daseiende Wirkliche ist Bewegung und entfaltetes Werden; eben diese Unruhe aber ist das Selbst; und jener Unmittelbarkeit und Einfachheit des Anfangs ist es darum gleich, weil es das Resultat, das in sich Zurückgekehrte,—das in sich Zurückgekehrte aber eben das Selbst und das Selbst die sich auf sich beziehende Gleichheit und Einfachheit ist.] (*Phenomenology*, 12; *Werke* 3:26; translation modified, emphasis added)

The *Phenomenology* says a great deal more on the role and the question of Nature, as will the present analysis, specifically in the context of matter and materialism. It is curious, however, that Nature returns, immediately after reestablishing the proper hierarchy and the proper teleology—the teleology of *Geist*, as opposed to the teleology of Nature—or “rejecting external teleology” in general. Nature and its becoming return, via Aristotle, by analogy with the authentic, true becoming of *Geist*.

The analogy itself is crucial by virtue of the model—the continuum—that has conditioned philosophy as the metaphysics of presence, from Aristotle to Heidegger, via Hegel. Nature, however, cannot quite obey this model, unless it is integrated—incorporated—into Spirit, as Hegel sees it in the end of *Phenomenology* just before Absolute Knowledge is defined. Nature cannot be reflexive or even self-conscious in general, as Hegelian teleology requires. Hegel has a point: once teleology or purpose is attributed to anything—Nature, for example—consciousness, indeed a self-consciousness, must be postulated as agent, source, or repository. In the end, however, what refuses *Aufhebung* is the more radical, more

disruptive becoming—the exteriority without teleology—of Nature. What Hegel sees as Nature’s “*free contingent happening* [*freie zufällige Geschehen*]” (492; *Werke* 3:590) is “free” to the point of ignoring the models that are proscribed to it by Aristotle and Hegel alike. Nature—matter—and the unconscious are bound to emerge against history and consciousness; but both—or, indeed, all four concepts—demand a different theoretical economy.<sup>48</sup> From physics to history, materiality demands complementarity.

One might say that at the end of the *Phenomenology*, “the end of the book,” one finds oneself at the moment when it is the *closure* of history that is inscribed rather than the end of history; and, to return to Derrida’s formulation, “what is held within the delimited closure can continue indefinitely.” I refer both to the infinity of a certain utopian history—history after the end of history—in Hegel and to the paradigmatic array of concepts of history advanced or implied by Hegel’s vision—the shadow of Hegel over the history of our understanding of history. In great measure, this closure is also the closure of philosophy, thus suggesting proximities or approximations between Hegelian and Derridean economy. Hegel does not speak in these terms, of course, and one cannot attribute such a conception of closure to him. But many elements of this type of economy can be perceived in Hegel. It leaves a powerful trace in both Heidegger’s and Derrida’s writing, to some degree in juxtaposition to Nietzsche, even in Derrida’s case and certainly in Heidegger’s.

By virtue of this closure, nothing can ever be, or will ever be, outside history in Hegel, although not everything belongs to the true History. Only by way of History [*Geschichte*], perhaps even to a greater extent than Science [*Wissenschaft*], does Absolute Knowledge [*das absolute Wissen*] become possible. The latter is admittedly a complex claim; and different readings are possible. Hegel’s own positions change and oscillate, at times quite violently, between and within different texts—most specifically the *Phenomenology*, the first *Logic*, and the *Encyclopedia*—particularly at the end of each, where this type of question is most likely to arise. In Hegel’s view, such changes reflect progressive stages of *Geist*’s understanding of its own nature; and he later sees the *Phenomenology* as a “peculiar [*eigentümliche*] earlier work,” reflecting the then current stage of philosophy dominated by various notions of the Absolute, such as Schelling’s abstract Absolute. But as Hegel also knows, they also reflect

much more, unless *Geist* changes its mind and history to a tremendous degree, even as Hegel moves from sentence to sentence—sometimes, as in the end of the *Phenomenology*, possibly in a hurry. Given the turbulent history of the final stages of the book, the indeterminacy and shifts of Hegel's ideas in this or any respect can be particularly significant in this case. Propositions like the one just advanced on the primacy of history over science may therefore be radically undecidable, insofar as the text becomes the site of different potential trajectories of writing, and therefore of reading, at nearly each point, which are further differentiated and disseminated by given interpretations.

This complexity and indeterminacy, particularly of the *Phenomenology*, although found elsewhere, is conditioned by a variety of factors—conceptual, psychological, social, historical, and political—many of which are well known and thoroughly explored in the literature on Hegel. On the conceptual plane, Hegel's concept of the science of logic is perhaps the principal factor. This concept is already in evidence at the beginning of the *Phenomenology*, becoming ever more sharply defined as the work proceeds. As is clear from Hegel's Preface and as virtually all major commentators have pointed out, this concept invades all Hegel's ideas at this stage. The concept of science, which Hegel comes to oppose to phenomenology toward the end (*Phenomenology*, 491), may well refer to logic, as Heidegger, among others, suggests in his lectures on the *Phenomenology*. Hegel himself makes no such reference at this point, however. He refers to logic as logic, contrasting it with phenomenology in the Preface (21–22); and in the Preface, he further refers to logic as speculative philosophy [spekulative Philosophie] rather than Science [Wissenschaft] (*Phenomenology*, 22; *Werke* 3:39).

Of course, as Heidegger and other commentators remind us, Hegel's *Logic* eventually evolved into a somewhat different project from his original plan, in which the *Phenomenology* was to have constituted the opening part; indeed, it may even not quite correspond to what he envisioned as the *Logic* drew closer to completion. Moreover, at the end of the *Encyclopedia*, the configuration at issue reemerges in relation to the economy of the Idea, somewhat in contrast to the stance of the first *Logic*; this shift suggests that perhaps one cannot argue, as Kojève does, that the very significance of historical determination is grounded in the question of the science of phenomenology, in contrast to the science of logic (*Introduc-*

tion to the Reading of Hegel, 165–66). Further complicating the case, in the *Encyclopedia* “The Science of Logic” becomes the first part, while “Phenomenology” appears in the third and final part of the work.<sup>49</sup> One can suggest the following as among the major conceptual factors that would determine or, conversely, would increase the indeterminacy and undecidability of the case:

- the role of the science of logic as a different stage of philosophical inquiry, a different Science;

- the related but separate issue of the role of the *Phenomenology* as only a part of a larger project, devoted to various philosophical sciences and systems of science, a project fulfilled in a different form in the *Encyclopedia*;<sup>50</sup>

- the complexity of determination of all Hegelian terms—phenomenology, logic, science, philosophy, philosophical sciences, and of course, knowledge [Wissen] itself; along with various aspects and stages of cognition—consciousness, self-consciousness, understanding [Verstand], reason [Vernunft], spirit, and finally absolute knowledge—and their interrelations and the difference in their operation at different levels, such as the excess of *Geist*’s knowledge over all human knowledge;

- the complexity and various indeterminacies of the historical economy of Hegelian transitions, the Hegelian economy of the “almost” and the “not yet”; and

- the specificity of the economy of Absolute Knowledge itself.

In addition, multiple, incalculable—but not always unaccountable—factors complicate the case, contributing to the indeterminacy and undecidability of this and other Hegelian issues. Not unlike Heisenbergian uncertainty in quantum mechanics, these indeterminacy and undecidability can also be productive, both in generating new readings and in advancing theory. A comprehensive treatment of the case at issue, however, would require a separate analysis, which cannot be pursued here. The possibility, however, that history makes it possible for knowledge to be in excess of science needs to be indicated.

This excess would further emphasize the significance of historical determination in Hegel, and particularly in Absolute Knowledge. In addition, this possibility suggests that a complementary economy is necessary in

order to encompass the relationships between history and philosophy, history and science, and history and theory;<sup>51</sup> and the idea has many interesting modern and postmodern resonances. Furthermore, even if Absolute Knowledge contains a greater share of history than science, this history conserves, is the *Aufhebung* of Science. As the final elaborations of the *Phenomenology* make clear, Absolute Knowledge is deeply “scientific”; it is organized, structured knowledge. As every *Aufhebung* must, the *Aufhebung* of Science in Absolute Knowledge negates Science and conserves Science, thus inscribing a certain double closure—the closure of history and the closure of science, or philosophy. In the famous final sentence of the book, moreover, both History and Science—“the Science of Knowledge in the sphere of appearance [die *Wissenschaft des erscheinenden Wissens*]” (*Phenomenology*, 493; *Werke* 3:591; Hegel’s emphasis)—constitute the conceptual, or conceptually—via the Notion—comprehended, *History* [die begriffene Geschichte] and “form alike the inwardizing and Calvary of Absolute Spirit [beide zusammen, die begriffene Geschichte, bildet die Erinnerung und die Schädelstätte des absoluten Geistes]” (493; *Werke* 3:591). Hegelian History is always conceptual and self-conscious, and it must be, since at issue in this history is *Geist*’s notion of itself. Still, it is history—*Geschichte*—that is the final overall determination in Hegel.

Here, too, then Hegel’s text becomes a machine or program generating various possibilities of interaction between history and philosophy with its various modes of inquiry, such as phenomenology and logic, or theoretical knowledge in general. Yet, to the extent that theory and history may be seen as the two defining aspects of intellectual inquiry, Hegel’s major transformation of the preceding intellectual configuration is inscribing history into theory. In this respect, the significance of history is, according to Hegel, irreducible and decisive, no matter how one reads the interactions among history, knowledge, and science in Hegel or how great Hegel’s contribution to our understanding of the scientificity of science itself.

Within a general economic framework, one would clearly need a complementarity of history and science, or theory under the conditions of the radical incompleteness of both—the radical loss in historical and theoretical knowledge; and at this point, Hegel may come closest, although not close enough, to the complementary economy of such relations. In

*Guilty*, conjoining, in the shadow of Hegel, science and history, Bataille writes, "Science, like history, is incomplete [la science est, comme l'histoire, inachevée]" (26; *Le Coupable*, 30; translation modified), as he explores, in a general economy, and between Hegel and Nietzsche, the radical incompleteness of all *human* science and knowledge and history in magnificent passages of the section of the book entitled "Angel" (22–27). The angels' position stands between men and God, or for Bataille himself, between Hegel and Nietzsche; in Bataille's viewpoint, Hegel and Nietzsche continuously and interminably exchange roles. Certainly, for Bataille the general economy is itself often, perhaps always, the economy of circulation, but again *in a general economy*, between Hegel and Nietzsche, between the radical completeness—but perhaps *not completion*—and the radical incompleteness of knowledge, between the Absolute Consciousness and the radical unconscious.

Hegel, it should be pointed out, also speaks of Absolute Knowledge [das absolute Wissen] rather than of Absolute Science [die absolute Wissenschaft]. Its inscription in Hegel's final elaborations clearly proceeds through history—*Geist's* Er-Innerung (*Werke* 3:591), the inwardizing recollection, memory-history or recollection-history—whereby the absolute Notion [der absolute Begriff] emerges to make Absolute Knowledge possible. Here Absolute Knowledge is defined as the full unity of *Geist* and its conception of itself (*Phenomenology*, 492–93; *Werke* 3:590–91). Thus this knowledge, as Absolute Knowledge, is, or at least may be read as, more than the knowledge of Science. "Wissen" is clearly the most persistent signifier in these elaborations, overwhelmingly—absolutely—so; the materiality of this signifier, as it were, suggests the primacy of the ideality of knowledge—Absolute Knowledge, *das absolute Wissen*—over the ideality of Science—*Wissenschaft*, which still contains the signifier, of course. At the same time, however, against Hegel, this materiality puts all ideality—idealist or materialist—into question, and de facto, textually deconstructs it.

Absolute Knowledge does remain determined by the economy of self-knowledge and self-consciousness. Because of its greater degree of historicity, Absolute Knowledge possesses a greater degree of self-knowledge and self-consciousness than does Science; without history, Absolute Knowledge could never have an absolute notion of itself. This claim would, I think, stand, however one reads the relation between Science and Absolute Knowledge in the *Phenomenology*.



An analogous, if not quite equivalent, configuration emerges at the end of the *Encyclopedia*, where Hegel's terms and elaborations suggest a more ambiguous interpenetration between knowledge and science, or philosophy [Philosophie]. The term 'philosophy' is suspended at the end of the *Phenomenology*, where in general it seems to refer to the human, as opposed to *Geist*'s, level of Science [Wissenschaft]. The end of the first *Logic* suggests a stronger determination of the culminating self-cognition of the Idea as philosophical knowledge. But the general claim of the radically historical nature of Hegelian determination in the extended sense of the present analysis could be sustained there as well.

The great movement of the three concluding paragraphs of the *Phenomenology* is from Science to Sacrifice to History and Absolute Knowledge, textured by *Wissen*, but also enriched by the complementary interaction between them, even if—but also because—that movement is also inhibited by these interactions. Absolute Knowledge becomes the vision of the whole of *History*—the Absolute and Absolutely (Self)-Conscious *Memory* of Geist:

Yet this externalization [Entäußerung] [enacted by Science] is still incomplete; it expresses the *relation* [Beziehung] of its self-certainty with the object [die Beziehung der Gewißheit seiner selbst auf den Gegenstand] which, just because it is in thus related [in der Beziehung ist], has not yet won its complete freedom. This knowledge [das Wissen] knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limit [Grenze]: to know one's limit is to know how to sacrifice oneself. [Seine Grenze wissen heißt, sich aufzuopfern wissen.] This sacrifice [Aufopferung] is the externalization [Entäußerung] in which *Geist* represents [darstellt] the process of its becoming *Geist* in the form of *free contingent happening* [in der Form des freien zufälligen Geschehens], intuiting its pure Self as Time outside of it and equally its Being as Space. This last becoming of *Geist*, *Nature*, is its living immediate Becoming; Nature, the externalized *Geist*, is in its existence [Dasein] nothing but this eternal externalization of its *continuing existence* [Bestehen, existence in continuity] and the movement which reinstates the *Subject*. (*Phenomenology*, 491–92; *Werke* 3:590; translation modified)

One can hardly speak here, as Bataille does, of a naivete of the sacrifice, to which the sophistication of scientific knowledge would be *sacrificed*.

The sacrifice in Hegel is, above all, self-consciousness and self-knowledge—indeed, Absolute Knowledge. There must be sacrifice in the existence, or life, of *Geist*. There must also be tragedy. Hegel's conception is *tragic*, in many senses of this crucial term, although, as Marx and Nietzsche understood so well, history tends to rewrite tragedy as farce. Marx's brilliant perception is actually a comment on Hegel: "Hegel remarks somewhere that all great, world-historical facts and personages occur as it were twice. He has forgotten to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce" ("The Eighteenth Brumaire," *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 594). Marx may in fact be recalling, or forgetting, the delay of World-History as actual history in relation to *Geist*. Hegel would not entirely disagree: nothing can equal the tragedy of *Geist*, although comedy, let alone farce, is not Hegel's genre, as Bataille stresses. Most historical unifications and utopias, such as Marx's, depend on Nature's support, the reinstatement of whatever *Geist* is involved, and a corresponding tragedy of human death and finitude. Most such conceptions are in the end laughable enough. They must be rewritten by *theory* as farce, and once put into practice, they have been proven by *history* to be farce.

As it extends into history, the sacrifice that concludes the *Phenomenology* is thus a crucial moment in the logic of the proximity-distance—and continuity-discontinuity—between *Geist*'s knowledge and human knowledge. Hegel, in his proximity to and distance from Kant, tries to think the transcendental of the transcendental and its limit. Possibly against or in excess of *Geist*-Science, as just considered, the sacrifice enacted in Absolute Knowledge inscribes a more radical—absolute—limit of knowledge, since knowing this limit is at stake. At work is the grandest ambition of the philosopher pursuing that which exceeds the limits of philosophy, exceeds philosophy absolutely.

Absolute self-consciousness becomes thereby also the consciousness of the absolute other, and this knowledge is unavailable to Science or to Science alone. Absolute Knowledge is *defined* by knowledge of its own limit, or its other, its own negative. Science, at this juncture, might be read as an absolute consciousness of *itself* fully reducing the unconscious and its inhibition *within* this self. But while it remains only Science, the *Self*—the *I* of *Geist*—lacks the equal knowledge of the Self of the *Other*. As opposed to the human self, there are no other selves for *Geist*. That does

not mean, however, that there is no other—internal—otherness to confront, in particular Nature or matter as opposed to Spirit or as overcoming one's own limit. By this point, *Geist* has overcome many an otherness and the Hegelian economy has engaged in many exteriorizations and self-exteriorizations and interiorizations. The most crucial of these proceed via the Notion—designating the conceptual economy through which *Geist* organizes its knowledge—ensuring the conceptuality and comprehensiveness of knowledge. But Hegel has not yet declared the Notion Absolute, and the Absolute cannot be Absolute Knowledge without its Notion becoming Absolute. Conversely, without Absolute Knowledge the Notion cannot be Absolute. Both must finally merge. Up to the final paragraph, *Geist* and the Notion have not yet been identified in the text.

At this point, in that final paragraph of the *Phenomenology*, History enters the scene. Hegel might well have been aware of and even deliberately played out these theatrics and tragedies.<sup>52</sup> “History, the other side of becoming [Nature] . . . conscious, self-mediating process—Spirit emptied into Time.” “But,” as must in fact follow, “this externalization is equally an externalization of itself; the negative is the negative of itself.” *Geist* now appears as History: “becoming [that] presents the slow movement and succession of spirits [Dies Werden stellt eine träge Bewegung und Aufeinanderfolge von Geistern]” (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590; translation modified).

*Geist*, finally, is History, no less, possibly more, than Science. Only by way of History, as a complex interplay of *Geist*-History and actual history [wirkliche Geschichte], can “the goal” be achieved—“the revelation of depth,” the depth only *Geist* can perceive and know, that is, *Absolute Knowledge*—and this revelation is *the absolute Notion*: “The realm of Spirits [das Geisterreich] which is formed in this way in existence constitutes the succession [Aufeinanderfolge] in which one Spirit [*Geist*] relieved another of its charge and each took over the empire of the world from its predecessor. The goal of this succession is the revelation of depth, and this is *the Absolute Notion* [der absolute Begriff]” (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590–91; translation modified).<sup>53</sup>

*Geist* fully merges with *the Absolute Notion* as its full, absolute knowledge about itself, to become *Absolute Knowledge*. Both can be achieved only in a mutual identification; and this mutual identification cannot take

place without *History*, perhaps only through History as the ultimate form of Self-Consciousness and Self-Knowledge, as the historicity of *Geist's* and human existence, its historical relation to past, present, and future.

By the time the paragraph and the book are finished, it becomes clear that Absolute Knowledge cannot be delivered either by Science alone or by History alone. Science has to be supplemented by History, History by Science. The *Aufhebung* leading to Absolute Knowledge is structured as a fusion—almost a complementarity—of Science and History, of historicity and scientificity. In this *Aufhebung*, both are overcome, but also conserved and enhanced in the fullness of (self-)presence, (self-)continuity, and (self-)consciousness. Science, through the Notion, represents all possible forms, at all levels of knowledge. But the mediation must contain all cases where these forms were at work—all the events of History—since all events of cognition must be incorporated into the continuum by this differential calculus of self-consciousness. In this calculus, they must also be infinitely differentiated before, or rather as, they are integrated. Both Newton's and Leibniz's differential calculus might be models of Hegel's logic here. Such a history of Science would contain an enormous continuum of events. One needs infinite being at each point—the intensive continuum as the infinite continuum filling the shortest interval in order to be in the presence of such a mediation.

It should be reiterated that, to a degree, even prior to Absolute Knowledge, this economy characterizes *Geist's* knowledge and the history of human thinking, in the degree of consciousness possible for it. Science and whatever historically contributes to it and is preserved in it and then in Absolute Knowledge are, against “a monochromatic formalism [ein einfarbiger Formalismus]” (*Phenomenology*, 9; *Werke* 3:21), always enriched by History. This enrichment, crucially, gives a *historical* character to the forms of knowledge themselves, both in the sense of mediation and in the sense of their relation to the historical and political conditions of knowledge. All these elements comprise the configuration of the Notion [Begriff]. Conversely, History—the true History—has always been related to knowledge, understanding of events, their meaning and their teleology. The goal [Ziel] of *Geist's* progress is to fully merge them in the continuum of (self-)consciousness. In the *Phenomenology*, this goal requires the sacrifice as the experience of the absolute limit, thus also making knowledge and history the consciousness of their own sacrifice.

The road—History—of *Geist* and the ultimate gradient of all knowledge, *Geist*'s and human, and above all philosophical—conceptual—knowledge, is defined by the *enhancement*, not the reduction of differential play. The latter becomes extraordinarily rich in Science and, by way of History, richest in Absolute Knowledge. At the same time, however, this gradient is equally defined by the enhancement of the *control* of differential play, in which Science exceeds everything else except Absolute Knowledge and which becomes maximal, absolute—or rather absolutely conscious—in Absolute Knowledge. This economy is Hegel's version of, to return to Heidegger's terms, "the all-playing structure [or juncture] of never-resting transformations" that "the more richly it unfolds, the more strictly it is held (within the domain governed) by a hidden rule" and "'bound into' the highest law."

This control of transformational play is achieved by way of developing, throughout the course of history, the Notion toward both Science and History. When, in Absolute Knowledge, the Notion becomes identical to the system itself, the control is absolute, that is, absolutely conscious. Under these conditions, however, the configuration of knowledge must become *encyclopedic* in the true sense of all-encompassing, but also fully organized. Hegel's most encyclopedic work, the "Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences," is also Science as encyclopedia—not a collection of facts, impossible as *facts* anyway, but a conceptually comprehended and comprehending configuration of knowledge. The economy of knowledge must thus also become *epic*; and for Hegel, as for Socrates and Plato, it is also Homer whom philosophy must exceed. *For Hegel*, it might well be Goethe, too; or Hölderlin, who achieves this epic potential by way of a very different economy, a kind of epic lyric poetry.

In the *Phenomenology*, then, the pinnacle of consciousness and self-consciousness and knowledge is finally History. History exceeds everything and is exceeded by nothing, even though Science [Wissenschaft] returns to the text toward the end in order to reiterate the comprehensive ("notional" [begriffene]) character of History. In uniting History and Science, Hegel's final phrase on the issue is "die begriffene Geschichte," "the conceptual [notional] history"—*History*, *Geschichte*, and not Science, Wissenschaft. Conceptual, *notional*, and to begin with, "*conscious, knowing and self-mediating becoming*," but nevertheless *History* (*Phenomenology*, 493; *Werke* 3:591; emphasis added). It is History that

makes knowledge of and beyond *Geist's* limit possible and removes the limits of knowledge.

The understanding emerging in the end of the *Phenomenology* is immense: anything and everything, but specifically Science and Knowledge, will be the product of an enormously long History that no Hegelian excess will exceed but which, on the contrary, accompanies and enhances every Hegelian excess. It all takes a very long time. Darwin applied this insight to a very different economy of history and life, and thus of human consciousness. As a result, *Hegel's Geist* becomes its product as well.

The problems of the Hegelian concept of History are formidable. We need a "longer" difference, or *différance*, of history, longer than anything Hegel thought. There will be "limits," too—irreducible limits, differences, histories, and exteriorities that, as exteriorities, will not take the form, perhaps Kantian, of absolute otherness. They will be too radical to be absolute, requiring instead complementarity.

Still, historicity is Hegel's central discovery and Hegel's greatest contribution to our own . . . what? Can one say *Geist*, our own, or even something that we cannot own? One must be hesitant, for it is always *Geist* of one type or another that reduces, de-limits the kind of length of history and difference that we want. It can, for example, be Science that would make history into a "conceptual History [die begriffene Geschichte]" as the totality of History fully mastered, or that can in principle be mastered as a totality, or that constitutes a totality that cannot be mastered by human consciousness or the human unconscious, individual or collective.

Under all conditions, then, both determinations at issue—history and self-consciousness—are irreducible and central in Hegel; and history itself and self-consciousness—self-consciousness and the self-knowledge of *Geist*, have no end in Hegel, the grand philosopher of infinitude.<sup>54</sup> Both, conjoined, are interminable, infinite. Hegel, we recall, concludes the *Phenomenology* by (mis)quoting Schiller's lines:

From the chalice of this realm of spirits  
foams forth for Him its own infinitude.  
[aus dem Kelche dieses Geisterreiches  
schäumt ihm seine Unendlichkeit]  
(*Phenomenology*, 493; *Werke* 3:591)

For Hegel it can only be the infinitude and the its-own-ness of knowledge and Absolute Knowledge. The “end” to which the end of the *Phenomenology* as a book brings us is the beginning of an infinite History, History as Absolute Knowledge—in fact, quite possibly more eventful than all history hitherto, even though and because of the very different, ever more conscious and self-conscious, nature of its events. Hegel’s last word in the book, perhaps Hegel’s *last* word on everything, is *infinitude*—*Unendlichkeit*.

### Concepts, Forces, and the Differences of Forces

Under the Hegelian conditions of reflexivity, the *conceptual*, *notional* [*begriffene*] nature or structure of knowledge becomes paramount. Hegelian self-consciousness and knowledge can only be the *conceptual* self-consciousness and knowledge. Hence everything—above all, reflection—must be done by way of concepts and finally the Notion [*Begriff*]. The latter and its equivalents and avatars at different levels of knowledge provide the overall control, thus always conceptual, of differential and transformational play.

One cannot see the Hegelian *Begriff* as a standard concept or as a universal governing the multiplicity of the individual, particularly given its reflexive character, or see it simply or only in this way. The Notion is instead a transformation, but also, as Heidegger points out, the *Aufhebung* of this type of structure (*Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, 99). It is a transcendental structure, which must be seen ontologically and ontotheologically, but which is conceived transformationally, historically, as governing and controlling the immense historical multiplicity—“the absolute *self-comprehending* of knowledge” (99; emphasis added)—and determined by and determining the self-reflexivity of all true knowledge. As such, it is the origin and condition of possibility of all conceptual knowledge; and even a very partial articulation of such a machinery would be immensely complex.

It is so complex, indeed, that it would require, finally, a suspension and deconstruction of Hegel’s idea of *Begriff*—his *Begriff* of *Begriff*—and of all controlled play of difference and transformation. As we have seen, this economy was defined in these terms by Heidegger; and it may be seen as defining all ontology or ontotheology. It culminates, as Derrida shows, in Heidegger (*Of Grammatology*, 19–23),<sup>55</sup> although the latter decon-

structs and precomprehends many preceding ontotheologies, and specifically Hegel's.<sup>56</sup> From the *general economic* perspective, however, all such economies, including Heidegger's, are *restricted*. As Nietzsche, or in a different context Bohr, grasped and as Derrida has demonstrated, the concept(s) of concept or—for they are indissociable—of meaning produced in the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence becomes a major casualty as a result. Such concepts of concept are not rigorously possible, or rather they and their limits need to be refigured general economically.

These qualifications complicate the structure of conceptual determination of consciousness and knowledge in Hegel, but also enhance it, particularly since it is governed by self-consciousness and reflexivity, which proceed by way of concepts, with the Notion governing the economy as a whole. Only given this conceptual economy do Hegel's complex stratifications of memory, again governed by self-consciousness, become possible and in fact necessary.<sup>57</sup> Along with Hegel's entire conception of memory, the *conceptual organization* [*die begriffene Organisation*] of knowledge, consciousness, and of all Hegel's semiology had an enormous significance, directly and in a more mediated fashion, throughout subsequent intellectual history. The most important examples are in Nietzsche and Freud and, along semiotic dimensions, in Saussure. As Derrida shows in "The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology" (in *Margins*), Saussure's semiology remains a Hegelian semiology.<sup>58</sup> Saussure's scheme depends fundamentally on concepts and concept formation, and on the concept of concept, to which the possibility of the signified is tied irreducibly. The possibility, or impossibility, of the concepts of 'concept' and 'meaning' or the 'signified content,' become irreducibly related by Derrida within this scheme, which leads Derrida to a general economy of the sign.

Anticipating Saussure, Nietzsche's elaborations on concept formation in "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne" [On Truth and Falsity in the Extra-moral Sense] relate memory and concept formation as reflexive generalizations. Nietzsche's conceptions there would be Hegelian were they not also designed as a critique or deconstruction of all semiotic procedures, to use this phrase in its broadest sense, inclusive, beyond more standard applications, such as to Saussure or Hjelmslev, of Hegel's semiotics, Husserl's understanding of the sign, or even Heideg-



ger.<sup>59</sup> Nietzsche's essay also intimates a kind of general economy and complementarity of all conceptions engaged. Anticipating and preparing the way for Freud's theories, he develops these ideas throughout his subsequent works. Against the determination or the "controlled indeterminacy" of philosophy, Nietzsche offers a fundamental, though again not absolute, arbitrariness of signs, thus anticipating Derrida's grammatology as a general economy of writing. This economy does not suspend the semiotic process, but recomprehends and complementarizes classical concepts, oppositions, such as the signifier and signified, or frameworks. This complementarization, together with the indeterminacy and undecidability it may entail, extends to more general areas and fields. Thus linguistics becomes complementary to philosophy; and conversely, philosophy becomes complementary to linguistics. Similar relations can be established with respect to psychology or psychoanalysis and other areas and fields. These complementary engagements remain general economic, however, and accordingly can be only partial economies, always encountering losses—some of them calculable, some incalculable or structural, but all strictly general economic.

In Hegel, the play of difference and transformations is controlled by a conceptual economy, with the Notion providing overall control. The restricted economy of the controlled ambiguities of the German word *Aufhebung* plays a special—and privileged—role. The economy itself is far more crucial, however, for it extends beyond the determinations offered by the German language and would not be so restricted by Hegel himself, however important its role is as a—or indeed *the*—philosophical language in Hegel, or in Heidegger.<sup>60</sup> Concepts and conceptualizations decide what is retained and what is negated, or discounted, what holds play and transformations in check, what directs and governs them, what controls "absolute flux [absolute Wechsel]," as Hegel calls it (*Phenomenology*, 90; *Werke* 3:120). Hegel surely has Heraclitus in mind, and offers *Geist* as a (re)interpretation of Heraclitean becoming. That this flux is characterized here as absolute is itself a kind of index. The Absolute as Absolute *Geist* culminates in Absolute Knowledge, which is Hegel's "Heraclitean flux" and "Heraclitean logos,"<sup>61</sup> which becomes therefore an immense pluridimensional, even infinite-dimensional diachronic manifold.

The Heraclitean river, however, remains a workable metaphor, if one

visualizes it as a river in its full potential—as the flow of multiple, and at times multidirectional and counterdirectional currents and their play of forces—but with its “dynamics of the fluids,” its “chaoses,” its “catastrophes,” still flowing in one direction. Whether one speaks of its physics or meta-physics, in the end this is a classical model, however complex and in practice incalculable the play of forces is, and thus can be considered along the lines of the analysis given in Chapters 1 and 2.

Nietzsche exposes the fundamentally arbitrary, that is, conditional nature of all such controls at all levels of its operation in “On Truth and Falsity . . .” and in his subsequent writings. Once arbitrary, once conditional, differences may always be controlled differently from the way philosophy wants and claims to control them. Nor can they be controlled by philosophy. Their play is too play-ful for that. It is a kind of Heraclitean becoming without the *logos*, which is the Nietzschean vision of Heraclitean or Heraclitean-Dionysian play. One needs thus a general economic complementarity of, interactively—complementarily—interpretive, historical, and theoretical transformational play developed in the first two chapters of this study.

At issue in the conceptual determination of Hegelian economy is, therefore, the structure of the economy of knowledge and history, and whether and to what degree both can be organized and controlled. This economy demands a “conceptually-comprehending [notional] organization [begriffene Organisation]” (*Phenomenology*, 493; *Werke* 3:591; translation modified), keeping in mind the qualifications just given. It demands, therefore, *organization*, in the first place; and even when a transformational and manifold process is at issue, as it always is in Hegel, the economy is always held together and organized by consciousness and self-consciousness. Both in its positive and its problematic aspects, this organized, systematic character of transformations and history is Hegel’s major concern and the theory itself is his major contribution to intellectual history.

Conceptual organization and organized knowledge have always been a part of what has constituted the scientificity of science, of course, or of true knowledge, particularly philosophical knowledge. Hegel has transferred this demand to becoming and history, incorporating system into history and history into system. In addition to philosophy, this transfer has had immense consequences and implications for history; the social

sciences, especially anthropology and linguistics; economics, especially political economy; and many other fields, theoretical or practical, including political. Knowledge, as conceived by Hegel, finally as Absolute Knowledge, is finally an impossible knowledge.

It would not follow, however, that one can dispense with organized or comprehensive "knowledge." On the contrary, as discussed earlier, much philosophical knowledge and much of its "logic," including the logic of reflexivity or even teleology, remain extraordinarily effective instruments of theory and practice, even leaving aside the question of whether or not we can do without them altogether. The general economy problematizes the classical *claims* made upon knowledge, consciousness, or the unconscious, reflexivity, and teleology; but it also refigures the restricted economies of their functioning and limits. Once knowledge and consciousness are deemed possible in the way philosophy deems them possible and makes claims on their limits or their unlimited power, Hegel becomes right, and some "Absolute Knowledge" *appears*, along with *phenomenology* of one kind or another.

Hegel's discussion in the section "Force and the Understanding" of the *Phenomenology* is of major, perhaps even unique, importance here. It begins with the economy of the Notion, extending the dialectic of the Notion as differential play. This play is configured as a kind of field of forces, governed by the *Aufhebung* and determined by the notion of or the *economy* of Force: ". . . the 'matters' posited as independent [selbstständig] immediately [unmittelbar] pass over into their unity, and their unity immediately unfolds its diversity, and this [diversity] once again reduces itself to unity [passes back into a self-reduction to unity]. But this movement is what is called *Force*" (*Phenomenology*, 81; *Werke* 3:110; translation modified). Hegel proceeds, then, toward "the play of Forces [das Spiel der Kräfte]" and, thereby, toward "differences of forces" as a condition, necessary but not sufficient, of the Understanding [Verstand]. The insufficiency of this condition, in whatever sense, is, predictably, the lack of mediation—the immediate character of the play of forces. While a necessary part of the economy, the play of Forces would be juxtaposed to the Understanding and its "inner world," determined by mediation and self-consciousness, although in the inferior capacity for both as compared to Reason or still higher stages of *Geist*. "What is *immediate* for the Understanding is the play of Forces; *but what is the True* for it is the

simple inner world [*Unmittelbar* für ihn ist das Spiel der Kräfte; das *Wahre* aber ist ihm das einfache Innere]” (*Phenomenology*, 89; *Werke* 3:119; translation modified).<sup>62</sup>

In theoretical and metaphorical terms, “economy,” from the Greek *oikonomia* [household], is a conjunction of management-organization relations, exchange relations, and energy relations. These relations are, of course, interactive, or again interactively heterogeneous and heterogeneously interactive—or complementary. One of the results of this complementary interplay is the emergence of the notion of economy as theory or science, such as political economy in Adam Smith and then in Marx, where it is mediated by Hegel and by Hegelian mediation and economy. Political economy, we recall, is a crucial dimension of the functioning of the term ‘economy’ in Bataille.<sup>63</sup> On the one hand, then, “economy” implies the exchange-management cluster, thus engaging the history of political economy in the widest sense, from Greek households to Smith and Ricardo, Hegel, Marx and beyond. On the other hand, “economy” suggests a metaphor of energy and, more thermodynamically, of the expenditure of energy. Thus economy-energy is the play of forces. The metaphors of the play of forces and of differences of forces is suggestive of the general economic *dissemination* of descriptions; and as such it operates against the metaphors of exchange and interest. Hence it acquires a certain strategic priority in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida, further expanding to a complementary field, which is better metaphorized by a quantum mechanical picture of field and may thus be contrasted to all classical metaphorical models, including classical statistical models, as discussed earlier.

The very phrase “the play of forces” is reminiscent more of Nietzsche, who used it, too, and gave it its more radical and most playful force. Hegel’s economy of force may well be its most important precursor, however, complicating and, against Hegel himself, finally undermining the restricted economy of *Aufhebung*. Beyond his brilliant elaborations in the “Force and the Understanding,” Hegel, we recall, uses his notion of the play of forces in the dialectic of master and slave in the next part, “Self-consciousness,” of the *Phenomenology*. There, and in fact throughout the book, complicating the economy of *Aufhebung* still further, Hegel also engages the metaphorical configurations just considered—the play of forces, the economy of exchange, and the economy as management.

This part of the *Phenomenology*, especially Hegel's dialectic of desire, has played a crucial role in modern intellectual history, and especially in France, from Kojève on, particularly in Bataille and Lacan. The same may be said of the economic thematics at issue. The role of various economic themes and metaphors in Lacan and particularly in Freud is enormous; it has been widely explored in recent history, both by the major figures just mentioned and by many other critics. The problematics of political economy may well have been much more important in the psychoanalytic field than is immediately apparent, and not only by way of more or less obvious metaphoric links or transferred theoretical matrices. Althusser's analysis and the development of Marxist theory make powerful use of such links; but his analysis also suggests that a massive reverse traffic—from the political to the psychoanalytical—takes place from Marx to Freud, Lacan, or Saussure. The economy of force plays a crucial role in this respect; and Hegel's analysis of force anticipates both Freud and Lacan, by way of an interplay of the exchange and reserve economy and the economy as energy and play of forces, specifically in the economy of desire.

The conceptual and metaphoric configuration of force and of the play of forces also crucially relates to "Hegelian semiology," as Derrida calls it. As we have seen, Lacan and then Derrida effectively join or complementarize Saussure and Freud, for whom both metaphors—reserve-exchange and energy and the play of forces, and of difference—in turn play a crucial role. Saussure's linguistics has been a major mediating force in this respect, in great degree defining the poststructuralist scene and the structuralist scene before it. Saussure's definition and economy of the sign and his linguistics as a whole actively engage economic metaphors as the metaphor of exchange economy. This engagement may well be conditioned by Marx and his predecessors, the creators of the science of political economy. It can be easily shown, however, for example, by way of Nietzsche's "linguistics" and Derrida's many analyses, that Saussure fundamentally engages the play of forces and differences of forces, and of differences to begin with. The word 'force' [*force*] itself plays an important role, both in his conceptual economy and in shaping, at times imperceptibly and against himself, the rhetoric of the *Course*.<sup>64</sup> Saussurean linguistics is thus a fusion of both dimensions of the economic metaphor—a reserve-exchange economy and the play of forces—just as Hegelian semiology and—and as—phenomenology.

This part of the *Phenomenology* and the thematics just discussed are crucial also for Bataille, who, as we have seen, transfers the economic problematic beyond the question of political economy to the possibility and economy of meaning, which is explored by Derrida's reading of Bataille. Via Saussure and other trajectories, particularly Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Bataille, the metaphors of exchange, investment, management, and related politico-economic metaphors acquire a major role in Derrida, thus also engaging political thematics and issues. They operate alongside and often in a mutually deconstructive general economy with the metaphor of economy-energy as play of forces. One of Derrida's early essays, "Force and Signification" (1963), which opens *Writing and Difference*, is clearly set against Hegel's "Force and the Understanding," to which Derrida's title alludes. It offers a critique and deconstruction of structuralism and thus, at least by implication, of Saussure. It juxtaposes, via Nietzsche, meaning and structure to force and the play of forces. The later "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," together with subsequent works, explores these thematics with great *force* and *understanding*, and with great *significance* for poststructuralist debate.

Often functioning together with metaphors of economy, metaphors of the play of differences and of the differences of forces have, thus, been decisive in the history of the exploration of the economy of meaning—from Nietzsche to Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Lacan, Althusser, Deleuze, and Derrida. Hegel, however, provides crucial anticipations on all fronts of this metaphoric conglomerate, and especially so in "Force and the Understanding."

In general, this is one of the most brilliant and important sections of the book, particularly in relation to the modern, or postmodern, scene of Hegelian studies and intellectual history. Heidegger, for good reasons, assigns to it a central, even a unique significance in the genesis and structure of Hegelian concepts, especially Absolute Knowledge and the Notion. In general, this part of the book has received much attention in the commentaries on Hegel, particularly in relation to Hegel's extraordinary notion of the "verkehrte Welt [inverted world]," in Heidegger, Gadamer, and Hyppolite, among others.<sup>65</sup> Heidegger, in fact, opens "What is Metaphysics?" by suggesting that, according to Hegel's analysis there, philosophy itself may be seen, from a certain perspective, as *die verkehrte*

*Welt* (*Existence and Being*, 325). It is crucial to keep in mind, however, that both Hegel and Heidegger continually reverse and re-reverse—invert and re-invert—such perspectives. In my view, Hegel's conception of the inverted world—and even more so the movement of his text—come closer to undecidability or aporia, and thus to deconstruction, than to complementarity.<sup>66</sup>

The general analysis in “Force and the Understanding” does, however, suggest interesting complementary possibilities concerning the relationships between the immediate and the mediated, a central question for Hegel. This analysis thus—often against its own grain—enriches and complicates, although never quite complementarizes, the relationships between them. The same may be suggested, more generally, in relation to the economy of *Aufhebung* in Hegel, again particularly in relation to reflection and the economy of the Notion, which is perhaps the main concern of Hegel at this juncture. Here and throughout the book, *Aufhebung* and the Notion become *complemented*, although again *not complementarized* in the present sense, by the economy of the play of forces. This complication and enrichment of the economy through the play of forces is one of the major functions of the economy of force in the *Phenomenology*. In the case—or rather instead—of *Aufhebung* and the Notion, too, what is necessary, but is impossible for Hegel, is a complementary economy and by the same token a general economy of “difference” and “mediation,” rather than the machinery of *Aufhebung*, the economy of force, and other Hegelian economies at issue, all of them restricted.

Enriching and complicating the Hegelian economy, the section, however, is crucial in relation to many other major conceptual formations of the *Phenomenology*, such as the inter-play of the forces of interiority and exteriority, in the context of Kant and in general, and the question of difference, and then the relationships between the Notion and the law. On the latter, Hegel advances the following extraordinary, although perhaps inevitable, proposition: “the *Notion* of the law is turned against *law* itself [der *Begriff* des Gesetzes ist gegen *das Gesetz* selbst gekehrt]” (*Phenomenology*, 92; *Werke* 3:122). That perception, too, could lead to complementarity; but one would have to pursue a route very different from Hegel's, with a very different notion of the law, and a different law of the Notion.

The economy of “the play of forces” fundamentally relates to all these

topics; and its major contribution is an enrichment of differential and transformational play, reaffirming its manifoldness in Hegel. From this point of view, the *Aufhebung* also always relates to a manifold, if controlled, configuration, in the manner of Riemann manifolds considered earlier. Hegel's economy of force is clearly post-Newtonian, although it has its history in Newton, a fact that Hegel plays out throughout this part of the book, along with many other examples and metaphors from the field of science.

As Heidegger argues, Kant's elaboration in the first critique also plays a decisive role in Hegel's analysis here (*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 101–12); and his references to Leibniz, Fichte, and Schelling are equally necessary.<sup>67</sup> I would even suggest that Newton and Kant are two primary *forces* at play with and against the forces of Hegel's own analysis. As Hegel may have realized, the entire discussion is itself a play of forces. Certainly, his analysis is designed to precomprehend the economy of this type of interaction, although the latter requires a much more “unconscious,” general economic analysis. I shall comment further on these relations between Hegel and his precursors later in this study. Force has a long history in the field of physics and metaphysics alike, culminating perhaps in Newton on the physical and Hegel on the metaphysical side of the issue. Relevant passages of Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics* could also be invoked here; but Heidegger may well be correct in assigning Kant particular significance.

As discussed earlier, metaphorizations by way of classical physics, even thermodynamics or general relativity, customarily conform to restricted economies. It may even be that, in this sense, Bohr's complementarity is the only general economic metaphor of that type available, although Bohr's is not strictly or only a physical theory, but rather a general economy of interpretation and theory or practice of science.

Of course, while indebted to Newtonian physics, Hegel's economy of force is anti-Newtonian, too, and is designed to precomprehend Newton and to explore the condition of possibility of all concepts of forces. In this sense, one can say that it offers a precomprehending logic of forces in classical physics, *among other areas*, similarly to the way Hegel's logic offers a precomprehending logic of formal mathematical logic, among other fields. This type of project is a paradigmatic philosophical project, pursued by virtually every major philosopher, from Aristotle, who actu-



ally precedes Euclid, to Husserl—most particularly in “The Origin of the Geometry”—and Heidegger. Such investigations are not only possible, interesting, and important, but also indispensable; and particularly insofar as they entail, as in Hegel, investigations of the temporal, historical, and intersubjective dimensions of logic—the dimensions that formal logic likes to and often must suspend, but in fact cannot do so, or rather can do so only within much more narrow limits than the ones it claims. Obviously, no less than in Hegel himself, the history and logic of the notion of force in Newton have a complex philosophical genealogy. But, as Derrida’s analysis of Husserl on the origins of geometry suggests, an analysis of this genealogy must be pursued by different, general economic, means.<sup>68</sup> As in the case of mathematical logic, Hegel greatly extends and enriches, and again precomprehends, the Newtonian conception, although, to use Newton’s language, most of the *mass* and major *force* of his extension are applied along the *gradients* of self-consciousness. They must be. Hegel’s goal is the “phenomenology of spirit,” in whichever sense of these complex terms or of the genitive construction.

Another crucial dimension of Hegel’s analysis here is his examination of the role of force and the play of forces in relation to the question of exteriority. The question of force and exteriority is decisive in the contexts at issue, and, by virtue of its relation to the general economy of matter, for the present study as a whole. Here the relation to Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* becomes extremely important; and Hegel’s analysis in fact leads to a juncture of Newton and Kant, particularly in relation to the problematics of the (im)possibility of absolute exteriority—the exteriority of mind or *Geist*, and matter.<sup>69</sup> Hegel’s contribution to our understanding of the complexity of the economy of the exterior here and throughout is vast. His economy of force remains a restricted economy, but its major determinations, such as *Begriff*, *Aufhebung*, the dialectic of the immediate and mediated, or of the exterior and the interior,<sup>70</sup> are made much more radical, transformational, and plural through the economy of force.

One may well say that what is most interesting and decisive in Hegel’s analysis of force is the anti-Hegelian counterpart of Hegel’s play with, or labor, via “the play of forces.” Throughout “Force and the Understanding,” particularly in the paragraph already referred to on “the play of forces” (*Phenomenology*, 89–90; *Werke* 3:119–20), Hegel’s recasting

of his economy as the play of forces and the difference [der Unterschied] of forces contains some crucial concepts in the history of the unconscious, from Nietzsche, to Freud, to Lacan, to Deleuze, to Derrida: “the play of forces,” difference, and difference of and between forces [der Unterschied der Kräfte] and solicitation [das Sollizitieren]. Hegel’s own analysis was enriched by these conceptions, but they in turn conform to and reinforce all Hegelian determinations, structures, and transcendentals that control the Heraclitean flux. The recasting itself, however, is of great interest because these conceptions played such an extraordinary role in the history of the unconscious and the undermining of Hegelianism. They do have other sources and histories that in part led to their appearance in Hegel in the first place, for example, in the natural and exact sciences. Hegel’s text, however, even if so *mediated*, must have had a direct impact as well.

‘Solicitation,’ including in relation to force, is a central concept in Freud, particularly early Freud on the “solicitation of neurons” in *The Project*. Its significance in Derrida is obvious, dating from his first essay on Freud, “Freud and the Scene of Writing,” in *Writing and Difference*. Derrida then develops the notion and strategy of “solicitation” of concepts, playing and forcing them against each other, which is in effect deconstruction.<sup>71</sup> This movement proceeds by fusing Freud and Heidegger, which is suggested there and developed in Derrida’s subsequent works. These relations entail more than a structural or metaphoric parallel to the Freudian psychic connection, or, in more strictly Freudian terms, cathexis *via* solicitation, forces, differences. By soliciting—dislocating, and dislodging, but also by reassembling—classical concepts, one must engage a different play of force and differences of forces. One arrives at a different, *general* economy of difference as *theoretical* cathexis, a different economy of thinking. As a general economy and the complementary relation it engages, such an economy *as* theory in turn engages, via Freud, a different matrix of all psychic processes—a massive parallel processing, although in this case the brain is no doubt a more originary, if not original, model for computer technology. As against Hegel, however, and importantly against Heidegger, such an economy does not claim or aim to establish theoretical thinking as the best thinking, or as fully conscious thinking, in proximity to some higher presence—of *Geist*, *Sein*, pure and absolute, philosophy, theory, science, or whatever. There will be *no one* or *no unique* form of theoretical thinking to begin with. In order to be

effective, theoretical thinking must be as plural in its style and genre as possible—conscious, unconscious, logical, paradoxical, linear, nonlinear, complementary, massively parallel, decentralized or multiply centralized, and so forth.

This is the reason why Nietzsche, a grand master of plural style, moves from force to difference. He does so much more radically than Hegel, if in his shadow, making this move from force to difference by utilizing and complementarizing history and the unconscious, among other things. This movement is first exposed in Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), where it plays the central role in reinterpreting or even *retextualizing* Nietzsche, although, as we have seen, the Deleuzean economy itself may be a great deal more Hegelian than Deleuze would want or hope. For Derrida, this movement is a decisive emphasis in "*Différance*"; he cites Deleuze at a crucial moment (*Margins*, 17), as his argument shifts to Nietzsche. Already in "Force and Signification" and, to a degree, even in his still earlier analysis of Husserl, Derrida moves precisely from and by deconstructing meaning, to Nietzschean forces and differences in order to undermine the restricted economy of meaning as the metaphysics of presence, in this case specifically the structuralist problematics. As always, however, in Derrida, the phenomenological problematics, from Hegel to Husserl and Heidegger, remain a crucial background and are important in "Force and Signification." "Force and Signification" moves from Hegel to Nietzsche and concludes, as "The Ends of Man," by invoking Nietzsche and Zarathustra. In "*Différance*" Derrida writes, citing Deleuze:

for Nietzsche "the great principal activity is unconscious," and . . . consciousness is the effect of forces whose essence, byways, and modalities are not proper to it. Force itself is never present; it is only a play of differences and quantities. There would be no force in general without the difference between forces; and here the difference of quantity counts more than the content of the quantity, more than absolute size itself. "*Quantity itself, therefore, is not separable from the difference of quantity.* The difference of quantity is the essence of force, the relation of force to force. The dream of two equal forces, even if they are granted an opposition of meaning, is an approximate and crude dream, a statistical dream, plunged into by the living but dispelled by chemistry." (*Margins*,

17; *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 43; *Marges*, 18; *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, 49; emphasis added)

All these formulations—Nietzsche's, Deleuze's, Derrida's—have an interesting, even fascinating, relation, different in each case, to Hegel's formulations in "Force and the Understanding" and specifically to the passage on play and solicitation of forces referred to earlier. Hegel's analysis thus has important and in many ways crucial relations to the theories, concepts, and metaphors of science, especially quantum physics. But these theories also suggest a very different economy of difference and force, radically undermining Hegel's "law of Force" [das Gesetz der Kraft]. Thereby they also offer a different law and economy of all transformations, of any form of cathexis—historical, interpretive, or theoretical. Against Hegel, and following one of Nietzsche's most powerful and persistent themes, the "essence, modalities, byways" of consciousness are "not *proper* to consciousness," as Derrida uses this term against Heidegger's "*eigentlich*." Nor are they proper to any form of presence in general.

This is a fundamental, defining difference, moving the play of forces "from restricted to the general economy," as Bataille appears immediately next to Nietzsche and Freud, in "Différance" (19). One must rigorously adhere to the dynamic—differential and transformational—constitution of presence and the continuum in Hegel. One cannot maintain, for example, tempting as it may be to do so, that the play of differentiation in Hegel proceeds from primordial and undifferentiated unity. Such an economy, by definition restricted, is possible, for example, *perhaps*, in Plotinus. But this configuration neither characterizes the Hegelian economy, which is always *transformational*, nor delimits the restricted economy in general. The Hegelian play, the play of forces and differences of forces, is far more complex. Conversely, the dynamic constitution of differences as the effects of transformation does not by itself guarantee a general economy. What is decisive is how, and how radically, the transformations are inscribed. In Hegel, force and the play of forces are in the service of the always-conscious meaning and concepts, meaning being present to concepts—in short, in the service of presence and its master—*Geist*—however transformational or Heraclitean all these concepts—meaning, concept, consciousness, presence, *Geist*—are conceived of as being. The general economic and complementary play of

differences, to which forces, or differences, or play—or indeed anything—is secondary, enacts a radical dismantling of meaning, consciousness, and presence while comprehending why and how they come about. While more playful, such general economies are also more logical, and they make better sense of the possibility and of the necessity of classical concepts as well, perhaps the only sense possible, at least for now.

# CONTINUUMS

... αἰὼν συνεχῆς καὶ αἰδιος ...

—Aristotle, *Metaphysics*



CHAPTER

This chapter considers the model of continuous becoming-presence—the continuum—that grounds Hegelian economy and Hegel’s “continuum utopia” defined by the claim of the possibility of a full reduction of the unconscious inhibiting the conscious and self-conscious continuum.

The first section lays out the Aristotelian genealogy of the model and the major aspects of its functioning in Hegel’s economy of self-consciousness, history, temporality, and the overcoming of time in Absolute Knowledge.

The second section continues the analysis of Hegel’s continuums by contrasting Hegel’s continuum utopia as a reverie of self-consciousness and Rousseau’s vision of reverie as the continuum utopia suspending self-consciousness.

The third section breaks with continuums and shifts the analysis to major forces “interrupting” continuum economies. Most of the section is devoted to Derrida’s deconstruction of classical temporality, but I also consider the relevant ideas of Bataille, Althusser, and de Man.

## Continuums: *Geist und Zeit*

As in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel's final proposition in the *Encyclopedia*—"[T]he Idea, eternal and existing for itself, eternally sets itself to work as absolute *Geist*, engenders, and enjoys itself" [Daß die ewige an und für sich seiende Idee sich ewig als absoluter Geist betätigt, erzeugt und genießt]—suggests the closure and the infinity of history. Hegel, however, does not quite end the *Encyclopedia* there. Repeating the closing gesture of the *Phenomenology*, the text ends with a quotation. The repetition is not without difference. The *Phenomenology* ends with a quotation from Schiller—a poet—and with the infinitude [Unendlichkeit] of *Geist*. While the personal pronoun "ihm [him]" in Schiller's lines refers to God, in the context of Hegel's text, it can be interpreted as referring to *Geist* or at least principally to *Geist*, thus bringing the text to infinitude in the often noted absence, if not the death of God. The much later *Encyclopedia*, by contrast, concludes with a quotation from a philosopher—Aristotle, and specifically the Aristotle of *Metaphysics*—and has as the final word God—*theos*.<sup>1</sup> Infinitude and the continuum are inscribed as much by Aristotle's passage as by Hegel's. These, however, are the infinitude and the God of Aristotle and philosophy, as opposed to the infinitude and the God of Schiller and poetry. According to Aristotle:

[On such a principle ("The first mover of necessity exists; and insofar as it is necessary, it is good, and this is the first principle"), then, depends the heaven and the world of nature. And its life is such as the best which we enjoy, and enjoy but a short time. For it is ever in this state (which we cannot be), since its actuality is also pleasure. (And therefore waking, perception, and thinking, are most pleasant, and hopes and memories are so because of their reference to these.)] The activity of knowing [*noesis*] in itself concerns that which is in itself the best; and the best [intellect] concerns [that which is] the best. And mind [or thought, *nous*] knows itself through the apprehension of the object of thought [the intelligible]. For it [mind itself] becomes the object of thought [becomes intelligible] by having contact with its objects and by knowing. So that mind [*nous*] and the object of thought [*noeton*] are the same. For mind is that which is *capable* of receiving the object of thought and being [*ousia*]. And mind *acts* when it *possesses* [it, i.e., its object]. So it is the latter [the possessing intellect] rather than the former [i.e., having the

power of intellect] which the mind supposes to be divine, and the act of contemplation [*theoria*] is what is most pleasant and best. If, therefore, [the] god is always in that good state in which we sometimes are, then it is wondrous; and if he is in a still better state, then it is even more wondrous. And so it is. And the life [of the divine] exists in this better state, for the activity of the mind is life; and that [the god, the divine] is [that] activity. The activity in itself is of that [the god] is best and eternal. And we say that [the] god is an eternal living thing, and best. So that for the god life is of unending duration, continuous [*synekhes*] and eternal. For this is god [*theos*]. (*Metaphysics* 12.1072b, 14–31)<sup>2</sup>

Several major connections to the main Hegelian themes discussed in this study may be stressed here.

*First*, “the activity,” labor, work is at the same time an absolute—without loss—consumption of absolute pleasure in, and as, absolute presence.

*Second*, this pleasure-consumption of presence remains awarded to consciousness and self-consciousness in Hegel and Aristotle alike.

*Third*, the economy as a whole is grounded in the model of presence and temporality—the line, the continuum—which, along with consciousness, are subjects of profound analysis in Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Althusser, and Derrida.

The absolute continuum in Hegel may not be seen as time. In Aristotle, too, time, or at least *human* time can never fully reach it, and Aristotle offers a complex economy of proximities and distances—and often both at once—in relation to that which is a realization of the model of presence and continuum. The model itself, however, underlies the very possibility of temporality and history; and all proximities, distances, and ruptures are measured in relation to it.

Hegel thus *ends* the *Encyclopedia*, and in a way his philosophy, where perhaps he began—with Aristotle and the passage that he must have known long before the *Phenomenology* but suspended, as it were, or held in reserve, like Freud’s *Vorrat*, until this point. Much is owed to more distant fathers, too: Plato, Socrates, and Parmenides, *the* father of idealism;<sup>3</sup> and much has been added by Hegel, particularly on history—Hegel’s great discovery—thus conjoining Heraclitus and Parmenides.

The Hegelian vision of history and consciousness demands an



enormous—and un-human—task, whether one speaks of individual or collective humanity. Immense, *infinite* resources must be summoned in order to eliminate all that inhibits the homogeneity and continuity of Knowledge and History. For, if there is anything that actual history [die wirkliche Geschichte] presents in great abundance, it is the *inhibition* of the continuum—heterogeneities; nonlinearities; ruptures such as revolutions, especially perhaps the French Revolution, although there were a good number of German events as well; and the unconscious, both collective and personal. While far from lacking in unities and continuities, neither in Hegel's time nor any other could the human psyche and, especially, history be considered to exemplify wholeness, unity, or continuity over any measurable interval. In this sense, one is much better off modeling the human psyche and memory on history than, as has been customary, history on the human mind or biography. It may take only a very short interval, either of individual or collective experience, to conceive of unity and the continuum as something that, at some point, it would be possible to have forever. But enacting such a possibility in practice, always political, and maintaining a historico-political homogeneity would, as Nietzsche understood so well, require an enormous imposition of power.

One can argue, as both Lukàcs and Marcuse did, that much of the Hegelian utopia is the effect of repression—a “disappointment” with the failure of mind and history.<sup>4</sup> Both Lukàcs and Marcuse attribute to the French Revolution this failure to conform to the desired ideal. The model and the utopia, however, also have their prototypes in the history of philosophy; and both are at work in Lukàcs's and in Marcuse's writings. The model itself, enabling such continuum utopias, has a long history and can enter a given text in many different ways. It could in fact be seen as demanded from a philosopher by philosophy—by its history, its institutions, its politics: the politics inside its institutions and, interactively, outside them. Throughout the history of philosophy from Socrates on, the model has been customarily applied to and, along with the philosophers themselves, confronted by political practice. Hegel clearly perceived the abundance of rupture largely owing, in his view, to “the lack of self-reflection” on the part of individual and collective humanity—people, governments, and even philosophers. This realization may have forced him to postpone indefinitely the arrival of Absolute Knowledge. To paraphrase Rabelais, Hegel suspends History in “a great almost.”

As we have seen, Hegel's mediation is immediate, *first*, in the sense of its continuous quality: it is a mediation *of* the immediate, or in Heidegger's language, the continuous *presencing of what is present*. As such it is also an im-mediation of the mediated—a restricted economy. It is, however, always the interplay of difference and non-difference; exteriority and non-exteriority, including, but not restricting itself to interiority; transformability and permanence. It enacts a heterogeneous manifoldness, controlled by the continuum, but not a simple continuity or linearity. *Second*, the mutual complicity between the continuum and reflection implies, and is implied by, the immediacy that is determined by *Geist's* concern with and its presence to itself: the self-presence of self-reflection, which in fact amounts to a continuum as well, for it demands self-continuity.

Presence and the continuum thus form the underlying model for self-reflection in Hegel and, beyond Hegel, across a broad spectrum of theoretical and political thinking. The underlying continuums may, however, take different shapes and differently interact with ruptures and heterogeneities. This complementary topology of continuities and ruptures also depends on their different functioning, whether in a metaphysical or a critical text in which both must function. Hegel wants to, or must, finally erase, for *Geist*, the experience of the limit and the possibility of all rupture, such as a plurality of disjointed, *heterogeneous*, even if interactive, continuums, or different lines of history and thinking. Hegel, in other words, wants to eliminate, at *Geist's* level, everything that would be seen, from the perspective of the present study, as the irreducible effects of history, or as affecting history, and would demand a general economy and complementarity of description and analysis. In Hegel, *Geist's* whole, by definition, will be in the presence of its part. This presence, however, must depend on an underlying model of the continuum. If there must be an absolute whole as in Hegel—even if it is a manifold mapping a differential and transformational play, as is always the case in Hegel—it must rely on a specific topology of the continuum, the topology of the continuous and, to return to Deleuze and Guattari's terms, the smooth, rather than the discrete and the striated, or in particular, the complementary. Hegel wants an all-encompassing and uninterrupted continuum, intensive and extensive—"unending duration, continuous and eternal," infinite at each point and in every direction. Or this is what Hegel must have had, given the full consciousness and self-consciousness

that determine the Whole and the True that is the Whole. Hegel attempts to offer “the One” of Parmenides, the oldest in the long lines of the fathers of *Geist*, merged with Heraclitean becoming: *Geist* is a joined interpretation of both.

One could suggest that, beginning with Nietzsche, who pursues the issue specifically in his early *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, the Heracliteans of the unconscious would, conversely, have to minimize the Parmenidean effects. It is important that against Nietzsche, whether by way of the anxiety of influence, displacement, or otherwise, Heidegger sees both Heraclitus’s and Parmenides’s thought as “thinking-poetizing on the truth of Being” in *Early Greek Thinking*. Heidegger always, from his earliest to his latest texts, sees Heraclitean becoming or genesis as the presencing of presence: “‘to come into being,’ to come forth in *presence*” (*Heraclitus/Seminar*, 8). Against Heidegger, Derrida suggests in “Différance” that “perhaps this [the fact that *différance* is the efficacy of ontological difference in Heidegger] is why the Heraclitean play of the *hen diapheron heautōi*, of the one differing from itself, the one in difference with itself, already is lost like a trace in the determination of the *diapherein* as ontological difference” (*Margins*, 22; *Marges*, 23).<sup>5</sup> Derrida’s “perhaps” is important. At stake in the question of *différance* is not so much a reading of Heraclitean flux as the character of transformations engendered by this play. The notion of the Heraclitean flux is a great insight, but given the text and history, it offers a huge manifold of interpretive possibilities. Derrida’s reading of the law of transformations inscribes, in a general economy, a radical difference as *différance*.

In Hegel, the continuum and self-consciousness jointly constitute the ultimate experience of consciousness, which is the main subject, in either sense, of Hegel’s own inquiry, human philosophy and of *Geist* itself, specifically *Geist* as Science [Wissenschaft], without which there could be neither human philosophy nor Hegel’s inquiry. “The way to Science”—the *history* of Science—“is itself a Science,” according to Hegel, and he adds: “hence, by virtue of its content, [it] is the Science of the experience of consciousness [die Wissenschaft der Erfahrung des Bewußtseins]” (*Phenomenology*, 56; *Werke* 3:80). Science is a crucial part of *Geist*’s labor of self-knowledge; but as suggested earlier, by itself it may not finally be enough to deliver Absolute Knowledge. Human philosophy is conceived as a human inquiry into this experience—the experience of

self-consciousness of *Geist*—and as part of this experience, into Science as *Geist*.

The ultimate experience of consciousness, Absolute Knowledge, cannot be made available to human consciousness, individual or collective, in either of its aspects: the full, and fully homogeneous, continuity of its becoming or the fullness of its self-reflection. All consciousness, self-consciousness and knowledge, *Geist*'s or human, are, however, always grounded in the model of presence, which, as Derrida points out, is customarily demanded by the concept of "experience": "As for the concept of experience, it is most unwieldy here [for inscribing *writing*]. Like all the notions I am using here, it belongs to the history of metaphysics and we can only use it under erasure [sous rature]. 'Experience' has always designated the relationship with a presence, whether that relationship had the form of consciousness or not" (*Of Grammatology*, 60; *De la grammatologie*, 89). Derrida, as we have seen, similarly relates presence and consciousness. In Hegel, it is always an experience of consciousness, and only consciousness and self-consciousness of or, if human, relating to, *Geist* that deserves the name "experience."

As a part of the same economy, the ultimate, absolute, form of becoming will not be attributed to Time by Hegel. "Time appears . . . as the destiny and necessity of *Geist*," but "*Geist* that is not yet complete within itself," which is for Hegel the same as the *Geist* not yet complete. This lack of completion also connects temporality and *Geist*'s relation to its notion of itself—the Notion. *Geist* remains temporal "just as long as it has not grasped its pure Notion" and thereby "has not annulled time [nicht die Zeit tilgt]" (*Phenomenology*, 487; *Werke* 3:584):

In the Notion that knows itself as Notion, the moments thus appear earlier than the *fulfilled whole* [*das erfüllte Ganze*] whose coming-to-be is the movement of those moments. In *consciousness*, on the contrary, the whole, though uncomprehended [unconceptualized] is prior to the moments. [In dem Bewußtsein dagegen ist das Ganze, aber unbegriffene, früher als die Momente]. Time is the Notion itself that *is there* and which presents itself to consciousness as empty intuition; for this reason, *Geist* necessarily appears in Time, and it appears in time just so long as it has not *grasped* [*erfaßt*] its pure notion, i.e. has not annulled time [nicht die Zeit tilgt]. It is the *outer*, intuited pure Self which is *not*

*grasped* by the Self, the merely intuited Notion; when this latter grasps itself it sets sublates [supersedes] its Time-form, comprehends [begreift] this intuiting, and is a conceptualized-comprehended and conceptualizing-comprehending intuiting [begriffene und begreifende Anschauen]. Time, therefore, appears as the destiny and necessity of *Geist* that is not yet complete within itself, the necessity to enrich the share which self-consciousness has in consciousness, to set in motion the *immediacy of the in-itself* [die *Unmittelbarkeit des Ansich*], which is the form in which substance is [present] in consciousness; or conversely, to realize and reveal what is at first only *inward* (the in-itself being taken as what is *inward*), i.e., to vindicate it for its certainty of itself. [. . . oder umgekehrt, das Ansich als das Innerliche genommen, das, was erst innerlich ist, zu realisieren und zu offenbaren, d.h. es der Gewißheit seiner selbst zu vindizierens.] (*Phenomenology*, 487; *Werke* 3:584–85; translation modified)

The much discussed identification of the Notion and time—“*Time* is the *Notion* itself, that *is there* [Die *Zeit* ist der *Begriff* selbst, *der da ist*]”—may seem enigmatic.<sup>6</sup> Given Hegel’s logic, however, this identification is logical and indeed inevitable, even though the logic itself follows very complex labyrinthine spirals, or spiral labyrinths, in the final chapter of the *Phenomenology*. Hegel, to begin with, wants to account for the conditions of possibility and history of time and the concept of time. He sees Time as having emerged in the history of *Geist* and the Notion and at the human level, in the history of philosophy that follows *Geist* in everything except possibly names. “Time” [Zeit] is a human name and a philosophical name.

In general, since this double dimension of the human and the philosophical applies to all other concepts—Space, for example—Hegel prepares the possibility of seeing and treating all these concepts *within* philosophy, and philosophy itself *as* philosophy—a comprehensive system of knowledge, as Marx was perhaps first to understand in full measure.<sup>7</sup> Hegel’s text, as we have seen, becomes a kind of philosophical machine or program for generating philosophical concepts, propositions, and conceptual chains. Then it becomes possible to inscribe a *closure* of philosophy as developed by Derrida—an economy that is radically different from Hegel’s, Marx’s, and other restricted economies, specifically, Heidegger’s.

According to Hegel, “as regards the *existence* of [the] Notion, *Science* does not appear in Time and in the actual world before *Geist* has attained to this consciousness about itself [Was aber das *Dasein* dieses Begriffs betrifft, so erscheint in der Zeit und Wirklichkeit die *Wissenschaft* nicht eher, als bis der *Geist* zu diesem Bewußtsein über sich gekommen ist]” (*Phenomenology*, 486; *Werke* 3:583). As we have just seen, however, Time is in turn, or in the history of Science becomes, fundamentally related to this self-consciousness *by way of* the Notion. One may not quite be able to claim that Time and temporality as *Geist*’s consciousness, or the unconscious, of its becoming appear in the history of *Geist* only with the appearance of Science, or after the appearance of Science. Hegel does not seem to specify the origin of Time in relation to Science or in general, and this origin is quite remote in history. That is also the case with history itself. At some point *Geist*’s knowledge and philosophy and, following *Geist*, human knowledge and philosophy become conscious of *Geist*’s and their own human temporality and historicity. It appears that historicity remains after, and is even enhanced by, the overcoming of temporality. On that score at least, Hegel, contrary to Althusser’s claim, seems to be more comfortable with the future, albeit the immediate future—*almost* the present—than with the past (*Reading Capital*, 95)—the future of *Geist*, whose knowledge, *according to Hegel*, cannot be fully available to any human mind, however exquisitely philosophical. Some crucial information—the annulment of Time no less—is somehow available, however: Hegel is hardly hesitant here, while obviously no annulment of Time is in sight for human history, and perhaps, for both *Geist* and humanity, no end of history either.

Even when Time is annulled or overcome, this overcoming takes place in the direction of temporality, history, mediation, becoming. One can also assume the same direction prior to the emergence of Time in the becoming and development of *Geist*. Here Hegel’s very formulation is decisive. While he does speak of *Geist*’s having not yet annulled time—“*nicht die Zeit tilgt*”—he also brings in *Aufhebung* next: “*hebt er seine Zeitform auf.*” The overcoming of Time consists in both a *strong* negation, a *strong* conservation, and a *strong* supersession, in short, in an *Aufhebung* of Time. The underlying model of presence and the continuum becomes fully realized by virtue of this *Aufhebung*.<sup>8</sup>

Derrida, commenting on the passage at issue or rather approaching it by way of the first *Logic* and Heidegger, argues in “*Ousia and Grammé*”:

Time is the *existence* of the circle, of the circle of circles spoken of at the end of the *Logic*. Time is circular, but it is also that which, in the movement of the circle, dissimulates circularity; it is the circle that itself it hides from itself its own totality, in that it loses in difference the unity of its beginning and its end. “But the method which thus becomes entwined in a circle cannot anticipate in a temporal development that the beginning as such is already derivative” (*Science of Logic*, Volume 2, p. 484 [*Hegel’s Science of Logic*, 842; translation modified]). Therefore “the pure concept conceiving itself” is time, and nevertheless realizes itself as the erasure of time. It comprehends time. And if time has a meaning in general, it is difficult to see how it could be extracted from onto-theo-teleology (for example, of the Hegelian kind). It is not any given determination of the meaning of time that belongs to onto-theo-teleology, but it is the anticipation of its meaning. Time already has been suppressed at the moment one asks the question of its meaning, when one relates it to appearing, truth, presence, or essence *in general*. The question asked at this moment is that of time *realization* [*accomplissement*]. Perhaps this is why there is no other possible answer to the question of the meaning or Being of time than the one given at the end of the *Phenomenology of [Spirit]*: time *is* that which erases [*tilgt*] time. But this erasure is a writing which gives time to be read, and maintains it in suppressing it. The *Tilgen* is also an *Aufheben*. (*Margins*, 52–53 n. 32; *Marges*, 60 n. 20)

First, therefore, no philosophy, as ontotheology or metaphysics of presence, can in fact overcome the kind of temporality it wants to overcome by means of absolute presence or the continuum; that is, philosophy is unable to produce a text that would rigorously sustain a claim of that type. Second, no answer—no answer fundamentally different from Hegel’s—is possible, if, as Heidegger does, one asks the question in terms of presence and wants the *meaning* and *Being* of time grounded in *presence*; and Derrida’s deconstruction of Heidegger and, more generally, of the *model* of presence and the continuum—the line—is extremely effective. As against, and *against*, Heidegger, Derrida traces and identifies the

model of presence and the continuum at work in philosophy from Aristotle to Hegel to Heidegger; and this model remains operative at all points and stages of the Hegelian and Heideggerian economy alike.

If, however, in Hegel, “the *Tilgen* is also an *Aufheben*,” such an *Aufheben* is also a *Tilgen*. Such would have to be the case, even though, first, this *Tilgen* takes place in the direction of Time or along the gradient that manifests itself in Time prior to the annulment [*Tilgen*] of Time and, second, the overcoming so claimed is rigorously impossible. Hegel’s model of Absolute Knowledge remains the *ideal* model as Derrida shows (*Margins*, 52–53 n. 32; *Marges*, 60 n. 20). The continuum of the ideal is the ideal continuum. By the same token, however, Hegel’s economy need not imply that there is no negation of time in the *Aufheben* at issue, in part precisely because temporality, for Hegel, possesses other properties, disruptive or inhibiting properties, that must be overcome. Hegel’s *Aufhebung* conserves and enhances only that which contributes to presence and continuum. Instead of a realization of this ideal as the *ideal Time*, the suppression or repression of various temporal effects—the erasure of time in Hegel’s writing—does take place and has its reasons. This repression is in fact demanded and produced by the *realization* [*accomplissement*] of the ideal model at issue, as the repressed “temporality,” imperceptibly for Hegel, produces the model itself. But one must respect as much the *Tilgen* in Hegel’s *Aufhebung* of Time as the *Aufhebung* of Hegel’s *Tilgen* of Time, even though the gradient of this transgression proceeds in the direction previously established by Time and the Notion as Time.

Perhaps the most crucial aspect of the machinery just described, this technology of writing, is that the model itself, whether as ideal time or the annulment of time in the ideal, is a repression or sublimation, as the vision of and desire for the ideal often is. It is a repression of much that is imperfect and disruptive, inhibiting temporality in, to march through the list of Aristotle’s titles, *physics*, *metaphysics*, *politics*, *ethics*, *logic*, *poetics*, or *rhetoric*, which is perhaps always the rhetoric of temporality.

This unconscious temporality—which is also the temporality or, but in the sense very different from Hegel, trans-temporality of the unconscious—is what philosophy wants to suppress *without* maintaining it, in the name of time or in the name of “erasing time in writing which gives time to be read, and maintain it in suppressing it.” But this interplay is what the general economy must be an economy of, suggesting the



complementarization of opposites, at times under the conditions of undecidability, or extended clusters—such as continuity and rupture, infinity and finitude, consciousness and the unconscious—and leading to the complementarity of history and the unconscious, or history, matter, and the unconscious.

If philosophy cannot quite repress such a temporality, either—that is, if this temporality must affect and may manifest itself in all of philosophy's ideals—it is so by virtue of the economy that relates to repression and, and as, sublimation. But it relates to many other things as well and is certainly very different from *Aufhebung*. The latter, as the Hegelian—restricted—economy, could also be seen as a certain sublation-sublimation.<sup>9</sup> One must displace this restricted economy in order to expose a very different form of sublation or sublimation produced within a very different economy—a general economy. A general economy, too, relates to more conventional Freudian effects; but it cannot be contained by Freud's, or Lacan's, economy of the unconscious and must in turn recomprehend them.

The general economy must actively engage the inhibition and rupture of “actual history” [die wirkliche Geschichte], some of which Hegel is aware of and considers. He also displaces them in order to make (the claims for) *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge possible. Some of this displacement was persuasively demonstrated by both Lukàcs and Marcuse, if still within a restricted economy and thus within a model of history nowhere radical enough for what is at stake here.<sup>10</sup> *Interpretations* of these displacements of (mis)representation in Hegel may be quite different, whatever the *Darstellung* as representation of something, *Vorstellung* as representation as mental image or idea, or *Entstellung* as displacement, that are engaged. Some or all of these are bound to be read or *written* as what Freud calls secondary revisions, which displace the meaning of the dream-thought. Hegel's own understanding of actual history [die wirkliche Geschichte] and his own *dream* of this history as World History [Weltgeschichte], on the one hand, and of *Geist*, on the other, may, too, be a secondary revision.

Many aspects of the continuum utopia, together with many effects of repressions or sublimations, are by no means discountable, even if such an analysis takes place within a very different economy and limits. That economy, in part considered by Derrida in *Glas* in relation to the question

of sexuality and family, is different, however, from “time’s *realization*” at issue in Derrida’s passage cited earlier—a *realization* of the continuum. That is assuming that the name “time” can in fact be used, even if it cannot be always erased, either. As shall be considered below, if one is to invoke, as Derrida does in “*Ousia and Grammē*,” the excess—perhaps most radical, but again not absolute—of temporality, it must be in the direction of interruption and inhibition, without final resolution or sublation—*Aufhebung*. Such an excess, however, and the overall process must in turn be figured without discarding the opposite direction absolutely. It demands complementarity, disrupting both Hegelian temporality and Hegelian transcendence of temporality.

The economy of Space [Raum] has a different character and a different role to play in Hegel. The question of space and spatiality does of course have its place—its space—in Hegel, and I shall further comment on space in Hegel presently. Space is, in addition, a defining counterpart of time in the Kantian configuration, to which Hegel responds. In Hegel, however, time and temporality are of much greater significance than space and spatiality. Their primary role is determined in the first place by the fundamentally historical character of all Hegelian determinations. Spirituality is above all temporality, or a transcendence of temporality, but along the gradient of the temporal. According to the *Phenomenology*, the a-spatiality at issue would characterize *Geist*’s consciousness of itself—*Geist*’s Self-Consciousness—at the *time* when the *Phenomenology*, or *Logic*, or the *Encyclopedia*, itself emerges and is completed as a book.

It is true, of course, that in terms of metaphoric or conceptual apparatus, specifically the economy of exteriority, one could not do without various spatial modes, models, and metaphors. Each of these quickly becomes multiply metaphorized and complementarized, with respect to different spatialities, or temporalities, or still other figurations and configurations. Hegel, too, would still have to rely on spatial metaphors, particularly on the complementary economy of the inside and the outside. In the shadow of Newton and Leibniz, Spinoza, Descartes, and Kant—or Aristotle, to begin with—Hegel depends irreducibly on the underlying geometrical configuration, on “the *line*” (*grammē*) or the spatial continuum in general. Certainly, much of Hegel’s thinking is affected by spatial configurations and spatial considerations at different levels, which, in Hegel or elsewhere, we cannot simply identify with space or time in their

conventional senses. Of course, a consideration of such a “conventional”—for example, physical—space or time, as in Hegel’s analysis of Nature, may be engaged as well.

Among other interpretive possibilities that could be considered are the defeat of Prussia by Napoleon at that time and place, and the space [Raum] of the *Phenomenology*. Hegel’s temporal inscription of *Geist* may be read as a displacement—a dis-spacement—of Napoleon’s spatial expansion and expansionism, “concentrated, here in one place, on a horse’s back” at the moment at that place where Hegel saw him, “the Emperor, that World-Soul,” at the battle of Jena, but according to Hegel, “extend[ing] over the whole world and dominat[ing] it” (*Briefe von und zu Hegel* 1, Letter of 13 October 1806). As Napoleon’s army advances, space grows smaller and smaller in Jena, while Time conceived of by the *Phenomenology* expands into infinity—beyond time.

Hegel’s attitudes, or the record of Hegel’s attitudes, toward Napoleon suggest, at the very least, a great ambivalence, including in Freud’s sense, multiply reflected in the textual space and time of the *Phenomenology*. It affects the closure of the *Phenomenology* and its concepts, specifically spatiality and temporality, and their de facto indeterminacy, undecidability, and complementarity. The Hegelian spatiotemporal economy, of course, cannot be contained by these more or less standard considerations, but they are far from irrelevant. Nor, conversely, can any form of spatiotemporal continuum or spatiotemporal complementarity fully comprehend this history or this geography. It goes without saying that for Napoleon, too, the space at issue is more than physical space, and is more than space; it is also time and history, and subject and consciousness and self-consciousness. Hegel understands many—but not all—of these complexities. The *Phenomenology* is, among a great many other things, also a record of this understanding and mis-understanding, and missed understanding—a very thick and, to use Byron’s phrase, “fantastically tangled” record.

This dependence on the spatial, as Derrida shows in “*Ousia and Grammē*,” is a crucial part of the history of the concept of temporality. The reverse economy is also at work, under the conditions and within the closure of spatiotemporal complementarity and the complementary economy in general. Such a dependence on spatial or other metaphors would not constitute a problem for Hegel, at least not that kind of problem.

Metaphor is seen by Hegel as fundamentally reducible, effaceable, as the truth itself *appears*—is (re)-*presented* in its presence or proximity to the degree available to the human mind.<sup>11</sup> That is not to say that Hegel ever was able to achieve anything even remotely close to this effacement in his text. He did of course practice irreducible metaphoricity, at times deliberately, although not of a kind found in Derrida, for example. A necessary spatiality—or, whenever necessary, temporality—is one of the aspects of the general economy in Derrida, or in Nietzsche, Freud, Lacan, and Bataille, as much as in the classical text, from Aristotle to Heidegger, or Einstein-Minkowski's spatiotemporal continuum. Indeed, the "space" of distinction between space and time, while often irreducible, is never unique and is radically differentiated and complementarized.

Heidegger's analysis of the spatiality of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* is decisive and has played a crucial role in our understanding and finally deconstruction of classical spatiality, in spite of Heidegger's own final reinstatement of classical metaphysical—ontotheological—spatiality or temporality. In particular, an extraordinary analysis of spatiality in chapter 3, "Die Weltlichkeit der Welt [The Worldhood of the World]," of part 1 of *Being and Time* has had a momentous significance in modern intellectual history; this analysis retains considerable power in its own right.<sup>12</sup> Heideggerian spatiality is really an analytic deconstruction of metaphysical spatiality, specifically in Descartes and Kant, inscribing a kind of more distant or continually—and finally, against Heidegger himself, interminably—deferred a priori. In this sense, Heideggerian spatiality anticipates Derridean 'spacing' as part of the general economic deconstructive ensemble of *trace*, *différance*, *dissemination*, and *writing*, even though, as against the Derridean process, the Heideggerian one would still reinstate the ontotheological determination of the process through the restricted economy of *Dasein* controlling this deferral at issue.<sup>13</sup> Such spatiality, then, or temporality, cannot be confused with physical space or time; it must in fact be seen as productive—as the efficacy—of physical space and time. Heidegger takes enormous pains to distinguish them. He arguably reaches the limits of rigor available to classical analysis; we, in our turn, must treat the classical limits with equal, indeed surpassing rigor from a general economic standpoint. Yet, as will be seen later, one cannot quite dissociate, let us say, phenomenologico-ontological space and time from physical space and time, certainly not in the way Heideg-

ger, or Husserl, Hegel, and Kant before him would want or claim. Rigor prohibits such restricted economies of differentiation, or rather, it refigures them and their limits in the efficacious economy, now general, whereby no form of spatiality or temporality—in fact, no form, and no content, of anything else—can be seen as unconditionally primary.

Time, then, has a much greater significance than space in Hegel. By virtue of the general economic efficacy just indicated, space remains irreducible insofar as time is there, but throughout Time, and before and after it, *Geist* is configured asymmetrically as more temporal than spatial. *Geist* is a u-topian configuration in the direct sense of the word meaning “no place”—not space but time, which *Geist* has in great abundance, to which is added the extratemporal, overtime, labor or play-labor of Absolute Knowledge.

Similarly to, and along with, spirituality, *subjectivity* is above all temporality—a process of conscious *becoming*—whether as *Geist*’s Subject or Self or as human subject. Following Hegel and, in many ways, Kant, temporal determination, with the qualification just given, remains a fundamental determination of subjectivity in Husserl, as well as, under the conditions of the unconscious, in Freud and Lacan. Husserl does not have a study entitled “The Phenomenology of the Internal [Space] Consciousness”; nor does Heidegger have one called “Being and [Space]” or later “[Space] and Being.” The fundamental horizon of the question of Being in Heidegger is time, not space, however spatial the metaphor of *horizon* may be. In his later works Heidegger speaks of time as prespatial, saying even that “true time is four-dimensional” (*On Time and Being*, 15). The latter formulation must have been influenced, as noted earlier, by Hermann Minkowski’s geometrization, or spatialization, of Einstein’s special relativity.<sup>14</sup> The issue is considered again in *Heraclitus Seminar* in the context of the difference between Hegel and Heraclitus (62). It is not that such studies are impossible or that space is simply, or indeed in any way, ever discounted in Hegel, Husserl, or Heidegger. For all these thinkers, however, the relations between Time and Space are asymmetrical—for powerful and perhaps irreducible reasons. It is true, of course, that some authors reverse the configuration, privileging spatiality, as in Deleuze and Guattari’s economy, although, as we have seen, many qualifications would be in order in this and other cases. In a general economy the effects of temporality and the denominations ‘time’ or

'space' acquire a very different efficacy and become complementary in the present sense.

To a degree, spatiality in Hegel could be seen as transferred to Nature, as Kojève suggests. In Hegel's World History as actual history, geography becomes important partly for this reason. I would argue, *perhaps* against Kojève, that beyond the impossibility of identifying Nature with Space in Hegel, the Hegelian economy of Nature is, in effect, asymmetrically shifted toward Time as well.<sup>15</sup> Under Hegelian conditions, the conditions of ideality, it cannot be otherwise. Nature is "externalized *Geist*" and as such is the form of "*becoming of Geist*" as "*free contingent happening*": "This sacrifice is the externalization in which Spirit displays the process of its becoming Spirit in the form of *free contingent happening*, intuiting its pure Self as Time outside of it, and equally its Being as Space. This last becoming of Spirit, *Nature*, is its living immediate Becoming [Diese Aufopferung ist die Entäußerung, in welcher der *Geist* sein Werden zum *Geiste* in der Form des *freien zufälligen Geschehens* darstellt, sein reines *Selbst* als die *Zeit* außer ihm und ebenso sein *Sein* als Raum anschauend. Dieses sein letzteres Werden, die *Natur*, ist sein lebendiges unmittelbares Werden]" (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590). Hegel's association here of Self with Time and Being with Space is crucial in that "Self [das Selbst]" is *self-reflexivity*, *self-consciousness*, and *self-knowledge* as the central determinations of *Geist* and its continuum. It is the *distance* from Nature that defines everything, *without*, in contrast to *Geist*, a simultaneous proximity: the further away from Nature, the better. Hegel, however, never quite manages to achieve the desired distance.

Hegel's economy of Nature supports his hierarchy, and in the last paragraph, defining Absolute Knowledge, there is neither Nature nor Space left. At least neither of those is mentioned, but only Becoming, Time, and History. Hegel's becoming of presence—the Hegelian *continuum*—is thus fundamentally temporal. It is the continuum of transformation and, and as, succession. That does not mean that Nature is no longer part of this economy, for *Geist* continues to depend on Nature, or that Time has any lesser role than Space in the economy of Nature. But it does establish a hierarchy that is irreducible in Hegel and is of great importance beyond him. *Geist* is always *more* temporal, more historical, more mediated, has more becoming than Nature. Nature remains a form of spatiotemporal existence, a "spatial temporal contin-

uum,” which Kojève pertinently invokes. *Geist* annuls both Time and Space, thus annulling its own existence and consciousness of itself as Nature. Or rather, *Geist* supersedes this existence and this stage of consciousness: as Nature continues to exist in Time and Space, while having transcended it, *Geist* continues, for nourishment, to depend on “this eternal externalization of its [Nature’s as externalized *Geist*] *continuing existence* [as] the movement that reinstates the *Subject* [i.e., *Geist*]” [“sie (die Natur), der entäußerte *Geist*, ist in ihrem Dasein nichts als diese ewige Entäußerung ihres Bestehens und die Bewegung, die das Subjekt herstellt”] (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590).

Hegel clearly extends the concept of Nature beyond the Nature of Newton’s physics to organic nature, specifically the human body. In this sense, away from Nature is always away from the body—a characteristic, even defining, phenomenological economy throughout the history of Western philosophy.<sup>16</sup> The Newtonian Universe continues to play a central role, however. The stage of Time and Space in the history of knowledge and science may also refer, at the human level of their development, to the moment of Newton’s physics. Among other “Absolutes” overcome by *Geist*, negated and conserved by its *Aufhebung*, in Absolute Knowledge, such as Schelling’s Absolute, there must be Newton’s Absolute Time and Absolute Space. Hegel’s critique of Spinoza must also be considered in this context. The conception of differential calculus—continuity and absolute continuity, limit, differentiation as linearization—together with related questions in physics, mathematics, or logic, as we have seen, conditions Hegel’s conceptuality. Much of the first *Logic*, and the book as a whole, can be considered in the context of the question of mathematical continuum.<sup>17</sup>

This perspective extends in relation to the conceptual—a *continuous*—synthesis, or the continuities and ruptures of all processes that are logical in Hegel’s sense, whether one speaks of *Geist*, which is the subject of the *Logic*, or of the human mind. In fact, Hegel’s relationships to Descartes, Kant, and in this context perhaps particularly Spinoza, as well as Leibniz, Newton, and Aristotle, in his *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, are indissociable from, although not reducible to, this problematics.<sup>18</sup> That topic, however, would merit a separate study and cannot be undertaken here.

The subject—in whichever sense of the term—of *Logic*, however, already governs Hegel’s thinking in the *Phenomenology*; first, obviously, by

virtue of configuring *Geist* as the economy to which the Hegelian laws of logic apply in full measure, and, more importantly, insofar as Hegel's major concepts and economies are concerned, such as the continuum, in its broadest sense. Newton is a great moment in the history of human knowledge, and Hegel perceived him as such. But Newton, great genius of mathematics and physics that he is, can only follow and must remain behind *Geist*. Furthermore, no mathematics or natural science can ever be as close to *Geist* as philosophy, on which Newton's conceptions, including those of Time or Space, must in turn depend.<sup>19</sup> Philosophy, accordingly, must differentiate itself from mathematics and natural science.<sup>20</sup>

The configuration and economy just considered pose a general question of the origin of concepts such as time and of science as a structured or organized knowledge—mathematics, the exact and natural sciences, or philosophy. This problem has been a major concern of Derrida's analysis, beginning with his *Introduction* to Husserl's "The Origin of Geometry." The result is a radical suspension of absolute origins. It is, however, a rigorous suspension demanding a reinscription and (re)-comprehension, on the one hand, of the claims for origins in a given text and, on the other, to the extent possible, of the efficacies of the configuration where metaphysics sees "origins." A metaphysical text, as Derrida shows, most specifically in the cases of Rousseau and Husserl, always must in one way or another suspend the *first* origin, and often wisely does so. But even then, the metaphysical text retains the model at issue: the linear model of temporality and history. The critical text, in contrast, must reinscribe this linear temporality and history as the effects of nonlinear *writing*. Whatever history is offered, one can always *ask* what went before. Suppose, as some modern physicists suggest, that everything began with nothingness. One can ask why and what or who put nothingness there. The question might then follow, however: "*Can* one *always* ask such a question?"—demanding the economy of closure of a given field and of all interpretation.

The origin of human concepts would have to be lost or suspended in Hegel as well; and Hegel more or less follows, even as he also attempts to account for it, a received chronology and historiography [Historie] of "World History." Both beginnings are suspended: the beginning of the past and, at "the moment of the almost," the beginning of the future—the beginning of Absolute Knowledge. They are suspended from the



human perspective where Hegel stands and sees himself standing; like Luther, he cannot perhaps do otherwise. However philosophical and however close to *Geist* it aspires to be, this perspective, being human, is insufficient in its determinations, including the exact determinations of transitions. This perspective, however, the perspective of "the phenomenology of *Geist*," as philosophy and as a book, claims—*determines*—the determinability and the control of differences and transformation by *Geist*.

In *Geist*-History everything has its order. This order controls and governs all the linearity and order of actual history as authentic, proper history. This history also *must* be authentic, for it *must* follow *Geist*-History. It has no choice. Otherwise it would not properly belong to History. This correspondence is what makes actual history possible as history and what makes actual human history *historical*. Eventually, when *Geist* reaches the stage of Absolute Knowledge, actual history, too, becomes transformed, as improved as it is possible for a human history to be. It becomes, as far as possible, arranged and linearized similarly to *Geist*-History, even though it cannot be Absolute Knowledge in the fullness of either its presence or of its reflection, and even though human existence—once behind *Geist*'s existence, behind Absolute Knowledge, and even *Geist*-Science—will always remain temporal.

Hegel's analysis of Time confirms one of the central points of the present analysis. The total economy of History, both during the *time* of Time and in Absolute Knowledge annulling Time in the absolute continuum, is that of *correlation* or synchronization and *control* of the play of differences and transformations as opposed to their elimination, the point deeply understood and extrapolated by Heidegger into his own, also controlled, economy of interpretation and history.

This point acquires major significance when, in the last chapter, Hegel arrives at the moment of relating and correlating actual human history, finally as the history of philosophy, and History—the History of and as *Geist*'s self-knowledge. For, as we have seen, "the movement of carrying forward the form of [*Geist*'s] self-knowledge is the labor which [*Geist*] accomplishes *as* actual history [wirkliche Geschichte]" (*Phenomenology*, 488; *Werke* 3:586; emphasis added), whose diversity and richness cannot be diminished, but must be correlated by the linearity or linearizing capacity of *Geist*.

In a complex and dense paragraph, Hegel rewrites the whole dialectical movement at issue in this context of *Geist's* relations to World History. Hegel begins "with the religious community [der religiösen Gemeinde]." Then through all major stages, more or less, of "immediate" and "mediated" relations and "*unity of Thought and Being* [*Einheit des Denken und Seins*]" (*Phenomenology*, 488; *Werke* 3:586) at issue in the book—perception, consciousness, self-consciousness, reason—Hegel surveys the history of knowledge both across the whole span of History and a more recent History. This history includes his thesis on Time as the necessary but still incomplete stage of *Geist* and the Notion. Much of the paragraph can be seen as referring to the various figures as indicated earlier—from Descartes on. Finally Hegel reiterates his critique of Schelling: "[N]or is the 'I' of *Geist* a *tertium quid* that casts the *differences* back into the abyss of the Absolute and declares that therein they are all the same; on the contrary, knowing is this seeming inactivity which merely contemplates how what is *differentiated* spontaneously moves in its own self and returns into its unity [noch ist es ein Drittes, das die Unterschiede in den Abgrund des Absoluten zurückwirft und ihre Gleichheit in demselben ausspricht, sondern das Wissen besteht vielmehr in dieser scheinbaren Untätigkeit, welche nur betrachtet, wie das Unterschiedene sich an ihm selbst bewegt und in seine Einheit zurückkehrt]" (*Phenomenology*, 490; *Werke* 3:588; translation modified; emphasis added).

The phrase "the abyss of the Absolute [*Abgrund des Absoluten*]" is repeated here for the second time. Hegel speaks of "the empty abyss of the Absolute" in the last sentence of the preceding paragraph as well. Hegel's central concern remains the necessity of mediation. The ever Heraclitean Hegel advances and affirms the philosophy of becoming as self-differentiation against the stasis of self-identity that in various degrees characterizes modern philosophy from Descartes to Schelling. As we have seen, however, Hegel's model remains one of *reduction* of difference and history in the name of difference and history; as such, it becomes a major paradigm of such reduction throughout subsequent intellectual history. First, in a move that might be seen as the final, teleological reduction, the play of transformations will teleologically be fully mastered in Absolute Knowledge as the full presence and the continuum of becoming as the full (self)presence of (self)consciousness—this "*organic self-grounded movement*" [sich selbst *gegründete* Bewegung] and this "pure determinateness"

[reine Bestimmtheit] (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:589). Second, a continuing reduction is enacted across the whole process insofar as everything even prior to Absolute Knowledge is governed, locally and teleologically—intensively and extensively—by this model. These model and teleology have enormous theoretical and political consequences, whether Absolute Knowledge itself is fulfilled, and in whichever form, or not.

The question of continuity and the continuum is somewhat more complicated at this point. At the end of the paragraph Hegel introduces, to use de Man's terms, a different "rhetoric of temporality"—the rhetoric of rupture, as opposed to the rhetoric of continuity—and he does so in the strongest terms: "breaking asunder" the continuum of "*simple* mediation of *thinking*." "To know the pure Notions of Science in this form of the shapes of consciousness constitutes *the side of their reality*, in accordance with which their essence, the Notion, which is posited in them in its *simple* mediation as *thinking*, *breaks asunder* [*auseinanderschlägt*] *the moments of this mediation* and represents itself [*sich darstellt*] in accordance with the inner antithesis [Die reinen Begriffe der Wissenschaft in dieser Form von Gestalten des Bewußtseins zu erkennen, macht die Seite ihrer Realität aus, nach welcher ihr Wesen, der Begriff, der in ihr in seiner *einfachen* Vermittlung als *Denken* gesetzt ist, die Momente dieser Vermittlung auseinanderschlägt und nach dem inneren Gegensatze sich darstellt]" (*Phenomenology*, 491; *Werke* 3:589; translation modified; emphasis added).

This economy of rupture does not contradict the general analysis just given or the thesis of continuum. First, Hegel's analysis involves an important juxtaposition between Science and phenomenology, as indicated earlier; and what is at issue in this sentence is only "a *side*" of the "reality [Realität]" of "the pure Notions of Science." Second, at this stage, the full and fully conscious continuity of mediation has not yet been achieved. In general, the *Aufhebung* continuums, as they might be called, at least prior to Absolute Knowledge, always involve the overcoming of breaks and their mending by way of mediation as presence in becoming. All these breaks are finally mended in the continuum of Absolute Knowledge as the experience of absolute continuity. The latter, once again, is available to *Geist* alone, even though it involves the enormous—infinite—rupture, the sacrifice, that cannot be continuously integrated by anything else or from any other perspective.

The break just indicated is crucial, but it is not the last one in the *Phenomenology* and certainly not the greatest or most discontinuous break or externalization. The last and the greatest one—the absolute break and, or as, absolute exteriority—is that of the sacrifice. Such is the structure of Hegelian economy: more radical break, or distance, leads in the overcoming-*Aufhebung* to a more “continuous,” more “present” continuity, or closer proximity; and absolute continuity is achieved by the absolute overcoming of absolute rupture. This economy, operative throughout the history of philosophy, culminates in Heidegger’s understanding of Being as simultaneously the closest and the most distant. It is, as we have seen, echoed in Derrida’s economy of simultaneous proximity-distance to Hegel, Heidegger, or the text of philosophy in general. Several of Hegel’s major elaborations in the *Phenomenology* could be considered in relation to these problematics, perhaps most particularly the famous and influential passage on death in the Preface already referred to in Chapter 4. The passage in fact anticipates or recapitulates or, looking into the future of *Geist* or Hegel’s own writing, replays the final drama—the tragedy—of the *Phenomenology*:

But that an accident as such, detached from what circumscribes it, what is bound and is actual only in its context with others, should attain an existence of its own and a separate freedom—this is the tremendous power [Macht] of the negative; it is energy of [*Geist*’s] thought, or the pure ‘I’ [of *Geist*]. Death, if that is what we want to call this non-actuality, is of all things most dreadful, and to hold fast what is dead requires the greatest strength. Lacking strength, Beauty [Schönheit] hates the Understanding [Verstand] for asking of her what it cannot do. But the life of *Geist* is not the life that shrinks from death and keeps itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures and maintains itself in it. It wins its truth only when, in absolute dismemberment [Zerrissenheit], it finds itself. It is this power, not as something positive, that closes its eyes to the negative, as when we say of something that it is nothing or is false, and then having done with it, turn away and pass to something else; on the contrary, Spirit is this power only by looking the negative in the face, and tarrying with it. This tarrying with the negative is the magical power [Zauberkraft] that converts it into being. This power is identical with what we earlier called the Subject [i.e., *Geist*],

which by giving determinateness an existence in its own element supersedes abstract immediacy, i.e. the immediacy which is merely general, and thus is authentic substance: that being or immediacy whose mediation is not outside of it but which is mediation itself. (*Phenomenology*, 19; *Werke* 3:36; translation modified)

This passage is one of the most extraordinary in Hegel; and it could lead to a lifelong meditation; arguably, in Heidegger it has already done so. In one way or another, this passage has affected most authors at issue in this study, certainly quite directly Heidegger, Blanchot, and Bataille, who all cite it, de Man and Derrida, and very likely Nietzsche and Freud as well. “The will to power” [der Wille zur Macht] already emerges here, although its economy in Nietzsche precomprehends the Hegelian economy, as part of the different—Dionysian—conception of the tragic. The latter has in fact profound relations to Hegel’s elaboration on Art toward the end of the *Phenomenology*, on the Dionysian night and Dionysian frenzy (*Phenomenology*, 439; *Werke* 3:529), just before Mnemosyne enters the scene of Hegel’s text (*Phenomenology*, 441; *Werke* 3:531). The question of beauty that “hates understanding” and thus the question of art and its relation to understanding [Verstand], that Hegel raises here, obviously with Kant in mind, loom large wherever this passage has had a powerful impact, whether in Nietzsche, Heidegger, Blanchot, Bataille, or de Man.<sup>21</sup>

The transformational, but anti-complementary, economy described by the passage and in the magnificent elaborations of the next paragraph, further enhancing and intensifying the power of mediation and transformability (*Phenomenology*, 19–20; *Werke* 3:36–37)—is at the core of everything in Hegel: the tremendous power of dialectic, *available in full measure only to Geist*, to face the radical—absolute—discontinuity and then to master it. It is the power to conceive of and to be *conscious* of it in the first place and then, through *Aufhebung*, to reintegrate this discontinuity into the mediation of the conscious and self-conscious mind while maintaining it as radical otherness. “Then” must thus also be a form of simultaneity, since the temporal delay and the negative “work” of time—“death” or “madness”—is mastered as well. This enormous capacity and power of converting absolute rupture into absolute continuum must take place *within* consciousness and, thereby within absolute self-

consciousness, the “I,” the Subject capable of being “the negative of itself”—the absolute negative of itself, which overcomes along the way the opposition of subject and substance.<sup>22</sup> This spiral mediation of dialectic “that holds its moment together” in the immediacy of the continuum is the condition of at once enacting and overcoming absolute difference, otherness, exteriority, death—which, in structural terms, is also the overcoming of what Derrida calls the “absolute”—that is, the irreducible—“past” (*Of Grammatology*, 66–67), the irreducible delay of *différance* and *writing*, in absolute and absolutely continuous presence.<sup>23</sup> Hegel’s economy of the continuum is both a realization—or a utopian vision of such a realization—and the grounding theoretical economy, a metaphysics of presence, that controls the entire Hegelian matrix. The irreducibility of the dislocating “past” within the economy of the production of presence would demand everywhere irreducibly composite and complementary interaction between continuity and rupture, infinity and finitude, and other complementary pairs and clusters, and a very different economy, a general economy, of all efficacies and closures involved.

### *Continuums Continued: Reveries*

The continuum as a model has a long history, commencing perhaps with the known origins of Western philosophy in Thales and Anaximander. In *immediate proximity* to Hegel, Kant’s analysis of temporal synthesis must be seen as a major contribution and influence. Whether temporal or spatial or spatiotemporal or exceeding time or space, the continuum—or in German “*Kontinuum*”—is always “Kantinium.” Its history proceeds from Kant to Cantor, the discoverer or inventor of the mathematical continuum and the author of the continuum hypothesis, and of the famous comment on his discoveries: “I see it, but I don’t believe it.” It then proceeds from “Kantinium” to “Cantinium.” Of course, the history of the mathematical continuum does not begin with Cantor, either, despite the enormous originality of Cantor’s contribution. In pursuing the history of the continuum in mathematics, one would have to follow the history of differential calculus back to Newton and Leibniz, and then along a long line where the history of mathematics and philosophy becomes still more entangled, via Aristotle, Plato, and the pre-Socratics, particularly Parmenides and Zeno—all of these possessing major significance for Hegel’s thinking, from the *Phenomenology* and *Logic*, to the

*Encyclopedia*, to *Philosophy of History* and *History of Philosophy*. Kant, however, remains a crucial point of this history as concerns Hegel and much of what comes after, specifically in Husserl and Heidegger. Kant is the closest to Hegel, even given Schelling and Fichte in between, yet also the most distant from him.<sup>24</sup> The relation is a reversal of the philosopher's relation to *Geist*, from which, however strongly one might want to achieve the closest proximity, even at best one is destined to remain distant. Conversely, in the actual history [die wirkliche Geschichte] of philosophy, it is often desirable to be the most distant from the most proximate or most powerful, although one is often destined to remain very close. Hegel managed to depart from Kant and much else, thus also earning himself a permanent place next to and against Kant. To paraphrase Arnold: Kantianism and Hegelianism, "between these two points of influence moves our [philosophical] world. At one time it feels more powerfully the attraction of one of them, at another time of the other; and it ought to be, though it never is, evenly and happily balanced between them."

Perhaps the most interesting precursor, however, and, in the present context, the most important, is Rousseau. It is true that before the complicity, influence, and anxiety between Rousseau and Hegel, all those had existed between Rousseau and Kant. Kant stands between Rousseau and Hegel. But Rousseau stands before Kant—Rousseau, the *writer* in just about every sense conceivable, some of which were known to him, others unknown or which he refused entrance to his knowledge, as Derrida establishes in *Of Grammatology*. The very diversity—difference, *différance* and *dissemination*—of Rousseau's writing must imply for Derrida, but not Rousseau, a (re)inscription of *writing* via a general economy of *différance*. This *différance* in Rousseau would encompass a fascinating manifold: from writing his life as a text, to "writing" his sexual life, to engraving musical notes: "I had a strong taste for drawing, and quite enjoy using etching tools [j'avais au goût vif pour le dessin, le jeu du burin m'amusait assez]" (*The Confessions*, 39).<sup>25</sup> Rousseau here refers to a still another form of writing, that he, the son of the watchmaker, practiced early on in his life when he was an engraver of—a writer, an engraver of lines on—watch dials. Rousseau was thus also a creator of these beautiful circles, Swiss but also Plato's—images of order, the order of the Swiss Republic, and Plato's eternity. They are, however, also representations of

and are based on the idea or the fiction of the fully ordered and fully continuous movement that captivated Rousseau—an engraver and the son of a watchmaker. “He [Rousseau’s father] relied for his living entirely on his trade of watchmaker, at which he was very highly skilled [il n’avait pour subsister que son métier d’horloger, dans lequel il était à la vérité fort habile]” (*The Confessions*, 17). As a text, the text about ultimate continuity, absolute presence, however, Rousseau also disrupts and inhibits, as a *text* as *writing* is always bound to do in one way or another, the thinking of philosophy—Kant’s, Hegel’s, and many others’, Derrida’s, for example—the continuum of its history and the continuous advancement of knowledge in general.

Hegel’s and Rousseau’s conceptions occupy polar positions on the axis of the continuum—the continuum as “consciousness” against the continuum as “the unconscious.” This polarity further illustrates the power and persistence of the model, which may be rendered with equal power via the unconscious, as, for example, in Deleuze and Guattari’s economy considered earlier.<sup>26</sup> Derrida exposes the model itself, “the model of the line,” as grounding Rousseau’s theory and history—archeology *and* teleology—of language. As in Hegel, except for “consciousness,” this model leads Rousseau to an attempt to conceive the *experience* of full presence—the plenum, the continuum of presence. This is the experience “which perhaps ideal, [is] so divine, that I must deem them real,” as Byron says (*Don Juan* XVI.107). Byron actually uses the word ‘feelings,’ placing the expression of his experience even closer to Rousseau, whom Byron admired, although not unambivalently:

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,  
 The apostle of affliction, he who threw  
 Enchantment over passion, and from woe  
 Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew  
 The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew  
 How to make madness beautiful, and cast  
 O’er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue  
 Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past  
 The eyes, which o’er them shed tears feelingly and fast.  
 (*Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* III.77)



Rousseau is, of course, a central presence on the scene of English and European Romanticism—the tradition that may in turn be seen as culminating in Nietzsche, particularly insofar as the question of the unconscious is concerned. The ensemble or, indeed, the economy defined by these relationships among the history of Romanticism, Rousseau, and Nietzsche is a crucial part of the historico-theoretical configuration at issue in the present study, specifically the history of Hegelianism; and it has played a major role on the modern and postmodern scene of theory, especially in Derrida, de Man, and deconstruction. In particular, Rousseau is a protagonist of Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*; and Shelley's poem is, as I have indicated, in turn "a protagonist" of de Man's "Shelley Disfigured," whose major theme is the question of the "continuum" and "rupture" of human experience and history. In a sense, as is often the case in Rousseau as well, Shelley's poem, to use a deManian phrasing, figures and is a figuration—symbolization, allegorization, and ironization—of this complementarity, on which I shall comment further below. Byron's lines just cited must have been on Shelley's mind. They offer an important context or intertext of the poem, although its intertextual economy is immense; and, it may be shown, it involves, either directly and implicitly, or subliminally, many of the figures and themes at issue here.<sup>27</sup>

In his discussions of de Man and deconstruction in America in *Memoires for Paul de Man*, Derrida reprocesses, as one perhaps must, this juncture of Romanticism and (post)modernism via Hölderlin—a great interrupter of all Hegelian continuums, the continuums of reason—as standing between Rousseau and Nietzsche (*Memoires*, 126–50). Derrida thus suggests one more chain, and implies many others—complementarily, continuities and ruptures—of figures and proper names: Rousseau-Hölderlin-Hegel; Hölderlin-Hegel-Heidegger; Hölderlin-Hegel-Nietzsche; Hölderlin-Hegel-Nietzsche-Heidegger; and still other permutations, additions, and recombinations, extending to more recent figures, including Derrida himself. Although there can be no all-encompassing or uniquely centered network in this respect, Rousseau plays a central role in many such clusters, certainly in many among those considered by Derrida. In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida writes on the continuum in Rousseau as follows:

To speak before knowing how to speak, not to be able either to be silent or to speak, this limit of origin is indeed that of a pure presence, present enough to be living, to be felt in pleasure [jouissance] but pure enough to have remained unblemished by the work of difference, inarticulate enough for self-delight [jouissance de soi] not to be corrupted [*altered*, *altérée*] by interval, discontinuity, *alterity* [l'*altérité*]. Indeed, Rousseau thinks that this experience of a continual present is *accorded* only to God: given to God or to those whose hearts accord and agree with God's. It is indeed this accord, this resemblance of the divine and the human that inspires him when he dreams, in the *Reveries*, of that experience of a time reduced to presence, "*where the present lasts forever, without marking its duration in any way, and without any trace of succession.*" (Of Grammatology, 249; *De la grammatologie*, 353–54; emphasis added)<sup>28</sup>

Underlined by Derrida is the conception of absolutely continuous presence—here *as time*—in Rousseau, the engraver of the watch dials. There the continuous movement of the hands conceals enormous discontinuous machinery, but this continuity, the illusion of this continuity, can be made possible only by this machinery, in a joint or complementary interplay that would force us to refer to the inhibiting *alterity* that, in every sense conceivable, *alters* everything, even all forms of alterity hitherto. Machines and technology, from the watch to the universe, are part of a long history. That history reaches from Newton to Spinoza, who, we recall, said that we should in no way despise technology, to Rousseau to Kant and Hegel and beyond, all the *way*, via Nietzsche and Freud, to Bataille's 'continuum' and the energy-entropy of *différance*, via quantum physics and complementarity and the logic of the undecidable, on the one hand, and of computers, on the other.

The history of *writing*, the history of the road, which is another line, is also the history of technology by which roads or clocks are produced and by which both artifacts are used.<sup>29</sup> Derrida's underlining offers a graphic pun that, if not deliberate, could scarcely have been left unnoticed by Derrida, *pointing* to the "line"—a thing written—always *underlining* a continuum. Derrida uses this idea in "*Ousia and Grammē*" as well. Rousseau's experience of the continuum, even as it moves beyond speech, celebrates the overcoming of the inhibition of writing in speech and its

proximity to the continuum and the pleasure [jouissance] of presence. Rousseau celebrates the continuity between speech and experience—a continuum that *slides* into the experience of the continuum. One can perhaps never slide quite continuously, neither from speech to experience, as Rousseau wants to do here, nor, via *Aufhebung*, from *Geist* into Absolute Knowledge. Writing must, thus, play an important role also in Hegel, “the first thinker of writing”; and its functioning there is powerfully explored by Derrida. It must do so, first, by virtue of the history of Western philosophy and language that one—here Hegel and Rousseau—must confront; and second, by virtue of the model of presence and the continuum and its perceived and unperceived reliance on the model of the line. These *lines* of thought, however, always slide or jump into *writing* and its discontinuity or complementarity.

This irreducibility of the discontinuous is perhaps the reason why Bataille is compelled to attribute a radical break to *Aufhebung*. It may be a problematic attribution, but it reflects a compelling theoretical necessity powerfully exemplified by Bataille’s own practice of sliding names and concepts. Bataille’s sliding, as a general economy, neither fully breaks with them nor is absolutely continuous with them, but it is not the *Aufhebung* of continuity and break, either, as Hegel wanted the *Aufhebung* to be. Bataille’s ‘continuum’—he uses and slides this name, too—inhibits and is inhibited by virtue of the general economy, thus necessitating complementarity. Hegel’s *Aufhebung* accomplishes negation, conservation, and supersession by way of *conscious* economy, minimizing the distress of inhibition in order finally to reduce the unconscious and all inhibition absolutely.

Rousseau’s time is absolute continuity—a *perfect* becoming, something that Keats once called “slow time” (*Ode on a Grecian Urn*, l. 2). Hegel, too, concluding the *Phenomenology*, speaks of “a *slow* [*träge*] moving succession of Spirits, a gallery of images [*eine Galerie von Bildern*]” (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590; emphasis added). For *Geist*, all time is overcome at this point: only a reverie, the reverie of (self)consciousness is left—a perfect, absolutely continuous and absolutely (self)conscious history.

Whether conceived of as time or as atemporal becoming, the continuum that underlines this *picture* of the gallery, too, does not have to be slow, perhaps, just fully, absolutely continuous and, in the *Aufhebung*,

enacting the absolute retention of all past presences. The Absolute Knowledge of the great, the greatest, mind—*Geist*—must have been conceived by Hegel as extraordinarily rapid thinking. Absolute Knowledge has to travel enormous distances, the distances of enormous problems. These are the speed and distances that are beyond the limit of human minds, beyond the limits of most minds, anyway; and the succession of Spirits appears, also in the sense of phenomenology, as slow only to the human mind.

A tremendous question of the relative temporal scales of history emerges here; among other sources, Cuvier's ideas about natural history and the Enlightenment cosmologies from Kant to Laplace could be cited as sources of this conception of the enormous length—*différance*—of History.<sup>30</sup> The process can be considered at the level of human, specifically theoretical, activity as well, in relation to the succession of ideas, transformations, the production of new propositions, or the multiplicity and heterogeneity of these processes. Not all "utopian possibilities" are discountable, in part in view of the general necessity of the closure of presence. These considerations would in turn demand a critical analysis of the opposition of slow and fast in relation to a given mind or histories of theoretical transformations: the *succession* of propositions, chains, projects, theories.

The Rousseauistic and the Hegelian experiences at issue differ fundamentally, then. In Rousseau, first of all, presence has *duration*, but it does not have *succession*. Or at least, as Derrida says, it has "no trace of succession," "neither trace nor succession," and it is "unblemished by the work of difference," "by work and difference." All of these, made *conscious*, define the economy of consciousness, *Geist's* or human, in Hegel; and the degree of consciousness is what counts most.

Succession—successivity and, and as, consciousness—establishes a decisive difference that affects much in Rousseau and Hegel, setting in motion, to use Husserl's famous title, "the phenomenology of the internal time consciousness" from Hegel to Husserl to Heidegger.<sup>31</sup> The sense and perhaps the voice of "succession" is a voice of articulated transformations, consciousness of change, and thus of consciousness. The latter is indissociable from difference as dialectic, also, no less crucially, from *work*. In this sense, in Rousseau it is a continuous interval—a continuum—a flow, as opposed to the point—*ousia*—or moment, but without change, without difference, without succession, and again, with-

out work.<sup>32</sup> The *Aufhebung* of reflection holds synthesis together and makes it possible without loss or waste. As such, however, *Aufhebung* manifests conscious and consciously controlled successivity.

This consciousness is thus also *memory*—finally as Absolute Knowledge, absolute memory without inhibition, memory without the unconscious and without forgetting, which, as Nietzsche and Freud understood so well, are always profoundly implicated in the economy of memory. Hegel's History is this memory, making individual memory social and political and a part of the general socio-political or, in Bakhtin's terms, the dialogical structure of all consciousness and self-consciousness—the dialogue or self-dialogue of dialectic, determined and controlled by *Geist*.

One need not even speak of total recall, or of trace, for it is *all* there in the consciousness of Absolute Knowledge. There one need not recall, in order to summon anything to consciousness from some other place: all past is always reworked and transformed *profitably*, without loss or waste. All that is needed is always there at hand, or rather always *here*, always *present*; and the resources at hand are immense. In this sense, Absolute Knowledge is the absolute reduction of trace. It requires an infinite reserve of and capacity for being-becoming at every point, and an infinitude of history as a whole, for intensive and extensive continuum alike. The infinite future history of Absolute Knowledge is made possible by this capacity. In general, as Nietzsche was perhaps the first to point out in the great opening, on "active forgetting," of the Second Essay of the *Genealogy*, the finite resources of the human psyche physiologically demand forgetting, repression, and inhibition. One needs this economy both as the economy of presence and, finally, as a configuring of a different efficacy of presence—that is, as the economy of *writing*.

Successivity leads to a profound historicity or, to begin with, to the temporality of all consciousness, as Husserl demonstrates. This economy cannot be suspended, but must be complementarized by the general economic modes of analysis and description. But successivity and history are in turn predicated on consciousness. The unconscious is an ahistorical mess to Hegel, who cannot or does not want or cannot afford to conceive that the historical order might be an effect of chaos or of neither chaos nor order—a radical alterity inaccessible to any of our terms or concepts, or neither terms nor concepts, or closures and openings, dis-closures.

Successivity thus crucially relates to the question of transformations,

becoming, as it were, the “*transformativity*” of the intellectual process in Hegel. Transformative successivity is the Hegelian economy of transformations. It is grounded, however, in the always conscious character and the teleological directness of its forces or the play of its forces—*das Spiel der Kräfte*. In Hegel, the transformative force of succession—mutational and transmutational force—is the always conscious and self-conscious force of *Geist* or the mind always transforming itself. It transforms itself always continuously, even when most radically; and as I have indicated, *Geist*’s greatest capacity may well be in this conjunction of the radically transformational and the absolutely continuous—radically transforming without rupturing.

Radical often implies a break with a previous configuration; hence de Man invokes the trope of irony as a corresponding “rhetoric of temporality” or, in this case, a rhetoric of transformability—of the continuous and the discontinuous complementarily. Different things, however, produce the effect of breaks, including radical breaks—ironic effects in the broadest sense of irony. These breaks will have to be “continuous,” too, in relation to other chains and continuities that interact with a chain that evidences a “break,” to make them appear as breaks likewise in the interacting elements. Consequently, in order to produce revolutionary, radically new, propositions of theory, to move knowledge forward with as much force as possible, which is a project always at stake in Hegel, one must have a continuous chain to work with besides the one against which advancement will be measured as radical. In order to *articulate* a change, one would have to inscribe a continuity and a break, or a more multiple play of both; and both always disseminate into further continuities and breaks, often in different rhythms and tempos of transformation. At the human level, as we have seen, such would be the more or less general dynamics—complementarity—of transformation—“the structure of scientific revolutions.”

At the human level, the conflict of forces is retained in Hegel as well, although within a restricted economy. At the level of *Geist* as Absolute Knowledge, however, since everything is in accord there, forces operate without conflict.<sup>33</sup> The process is liberated or deprived of the tensions accompanying human processes, such as the interplay of work and pleasure, resolutions or irresolvability, and conflict between and within theories, ideologies, and psychologies. The economy of Absolute Knowledge

is consumption without losses—the absolute consumption of presence and pleasure. But, in this sense perhaps in opposition also to Rousseau, this absolute consumption takes place as a continuous production of new knowledge. Or rather, the play and labor, the pain and pleasure of knowledge would be *played* out, or *worked* out, differently. Hegel does not say how this will occur; and one cannot say that anything of that type can be possible, however much some individual or collective “experiences”—*over short intervals*—may suggest this picture.

The main point, consistent I think with Hegel’s vision and claims, is that Absolute Knowledge is an uninhibited continuous production of knowledge reinforced by absolute and absolutely conscious memory. It does not waste or lose old knowledge, nor does it simply retain—“store”—it: everything is continuously utilized and transformed into new knowledge and consciousness. The formulation “old knowledge” may not apply. It is a “permanent revolution” of knowledge, although without breaks, *without revolutions*. In a certain sense, Trotsky’s conception of permanent revolution reverses breaks into continuity by making them permanent. As a result, like all utopias, it reinstates the continuum.<sup>34</sup>

In Hegel, nothing small happens, either. It is a continuum of absolute greatness, a truly “grand march of intellect,” to use Keats’s rather Hegelian phrase (*The Letters of John Keats* 1, 282). In Nietzsche, dance would be the appropriate metaphor; but for Hegel, who saw a great guarantee of true culture and community in compulsory military service, as for Socrates, the march is a more appropriate musical genre.

Hegel pursues the process of articulated transformations. As such, it is a profoundly theoretical experience—a continuous production of knowledge. As in Rousseau, the mastery of presence, and of the process, is achieved and inhibition is reduced absolutely: nothing interrupts, everything is conserved, nothing is lost except what is thrown out, but even the act of discarding does not interrupt the continuum. Even negation, while continuously necessary, works without leaving anything behind, always reintegrated into new configurations of knowledge. The field of *Geist* is rich and diverse—full of difference—but without any uncontrolled heterogeneities, ruptures, or interruptions. Differences are controlled in and by the fullness of presence, continuum and consciousness. There is no unconscious in any sense. It is, as Absolute Knowledge, new knowledge emerging immediately and continuously in the form of presence to the

mediating and reflecting *Geist*, as *Geist* experiences the system of knowledge increasing—such is *its own* structure—in its own organized knowledge as self-knowledge.

In this sense it is a profoundly historical conception. It is a knowledge that in the end will master its own history absolutely: it is able to do so and, in order to be Absolute Knowledge, must effect this mastery. In a sense, through symmetry and in order to avoid rupture, it would also have to “conserve” its “future” as the *present* future. That is, since not all of this future may be *known*, if knowledge is to continue, what appears at the human level of consciousness and knowledge is “anticipations” or “protentions” that are then often frustrated, rupturing the continuum, and that also become fully continuous in Absolute Knowledge. Hegel does not fully specify the process; and the point is that such a continuum and any presence in general cannot be rigorously inscribed, certainly not for thinking or memory, or history.

Hegel and Rousseau do not claim that such an experience is ever fully available to human beings. The experience of the continuum is attributed to God in Rousseau, or to the *closest proximity* to God, making it perhaps more conceivable as a human experience. Translated into the experience and the continuum of consciousness, the same or nearly the same situation would be the case in Hegel—not that one can simply identify Absolute Knowledge or *Geist* with God. Derrida’s proposition that “only infinite being can reduce difference in presence [Seul l’être infini peut réduire la différence dans la présence]” (*Of Grammatology*, 71; *De la grammatologie*, 104) applies to Hegel and Rousseau alike. The metaphysics of presence is always a profoundly infinitist metaphysics, which has among its major sources Socrates and Plato, or even earlier Parmenides, as well as Aristotle, who could say in the *Metaphysics* that “for the god life is of unending duration, continuous and eternal” (12:1072b).<sup>35</sup>

Derrida correctly sees the metaphysics of proximity as the metaphysics of presence. As for Rousseau, who would probably think in this context of “the best hearts,” for Hegel, the best minds—the best philosophical minds—at their best moment, may come extremely close, even into immediate proximity to the absolute continuum of Absolute Knowledge. The *line* would still be their best model, as, importantly, would be the model of *process*—the conscious becoming—of thinking, cognition, memory, understanding, or creativity; in short, the process of knowledge-



*Wissen*. But this continuum will never be fully accessible to them—perhaps, for the continuum as experience, including the conscious or theoretical continuum, has to be modeled on something, on some experience that has a measure of the continuum. The model has to come from somewhere. With its long history as a model—moreover, an inaccessible model—it can always readily be appropriated for one experience or another, human or divine, accessible or inaccessible. One can, however, and must consider “experiences” or the effects of presence, the continuum, and reverie in Rousseau’s or Hegel’s sense, all of which might be described as intervals of continuity or proximate continuity. These are the irreducible effects of presence and its closure—the closure of presence that creates the closure of metaphysics, but which may be seen as a more extensive and general closure.

There is never one line; presence and its closure can neither be uninterrupted nor fully or continuously integrated. They cannot be free from death, not only in the general sense that everyone has to die, but also in a much more pervasive sense of interruption: an always “beyond the pleasure principle,” or the presence principle. At any given interval, there are always a finite number of “neurons” available to us rather than “the duration continuous and eternal.” Their underlying play produces the effects of continuities *and* ruptures, necessitating at times one “rhetoric of temporality,” at times another, and thus leads to complementarity. In *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, Rousseau lays claim to long intervals of such experience with a minimal degree of rupture. While no such claim can be taken for granted, it is not beyond possibility; and it is important that this type of experience *may* be possible to sustain over a longer interval. Long continuities are possible, including political ones—the continuities of social order or the continuities of revolutions, permanent revolutions, that is, those that last for some years—and we do have examples of rather long conflicts that promise to be virtually permanent. The utopian configuration consists in extending such a continuity or projecting it as a possibility upon *Geist*, God, or a human collectivity. One can thus define ‘utopia’ as a fully reduced inhibition, whether in a local sense of fully uninhibited experience over a given interval as opposed to the effects of the uninhibited, or in the sense of the infinite extension of such an interval.

It follows, in opposition to Hegel, that the unconscious counterpart of

any experience, including any artistic or theoretical production, can never be reduced, however continuous and however conscious it might appear. Were *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge possible, they would require the unconscious—the structural, irreducible, unconscious. They would be much closer to the processes inscribed—engraved—in another contemporary, William Blake, who was a severe critic, if not of Hegel himself, certainly of many a Hegelianism, particularly in *Jerusalem*: “I must Create a System, or be enslav’d by another Mans” (*Jerusalem*, chap. 1, pl. 10, l. 20). Hegel, this grand master, or master-slave, or slave-master, certainly did that; but he could not have done so without drawing heavily on the unconscious, in fact more than even Blake was able to inscribe or to engrave. The economy proposed by Blake, while abundantly *endowed* with the unconscious and offering some of the most interesting early intimations of complementarity, would in the end not have enough of the unconscious or of the unconscious conceived of radically enough. This economy, too, is finally a restricted one, even though Bataille draws on Blake at a crucial point of his meditation by quoting from him in the epigraph to part 3 of *Inner Experience*.<sup>36</sup>

It appears that engravers, such as Rousseau and Blake, often favor the unconscious; in the light of Derrida’s analysis of *writing*, this observation would make particular sense. Rousseau’s and Blake’s preference for presence, which usually takes over in the end, is a different matter, of course. In practice, all—or at least most—of us may prefer presence and the pleasure of, and as, presence, although all major theorists of the unconscious—from Rousseau, and indeed at certain moments Socrates and Plato, to Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, Lacan, and Derrida on the modern scene—understood that to prefer the economy of achieving such experience is a far more complex matter. This complexity constrains our theories against unconditionally privileging anything, presence or absence, continuity or rupture, infinity or finitude, in producing the economy of any “experience.”

In Hegel, the notion of absolute continuum as the unconscious is conceivable, but is dismissed as an inferior mode of spirituality, as in his analysis of Indian civilization in *The Philosophy of History*. The *Geist* of Indian civilization, according to Hegel, deceptively and deceivingly attracts and seduces, in part by its continuum, by the absence of painful ruptures; and one cannot perhaps speak of *Geist* here, even though

Hegel uses the word in *The Philosophy of History*. But this continuum is itself a great rupture.<sup>37</sup> It is an absolute forgetting as against absolute and absolutely conscious memory, a dream set against incessant wakefulness of, to follow the hierarchy inscribed in the sequence of chapters in the *Phenomenology*, “Consciousness,” “Self-Consciousness,” “Reason,” “Geist”—from Religion to Art to Science—and finally to “Absolute Knowledge.” These are the steps of overcoming the unconscious—as a rupture and as a false, seducing, continuum. The world of the Hindus is the death of consciousness and self-consciousness. “This makes them [Hindus] incapable of *writing* History [*Geschichtsschreibung*]. All that happens is dissipated in their minds into confused dreams. What we call historical truth and veracity—intelligent meaningful comprehension of events, and fidelity in representing them—nothing of this sort can be looked for among the Hindoos [nach allem diesen ist bei den Indern gar nicht zu fragen]” (*The Philosophy of History*, 162; *Philosophie der Geschichte*, *Werke* 12:203; translation modified; emphasis added).

Writing, particularly alphabetical writing, here becomes a positive force as a stage of consciousness. It is inferior to the highest consciousness of conscious and self-conscious speech in turn—or even more so, of thought—but is necessary for History to arrive at the higher modes of consciousness. The nuances and paradoxes of this scheme are brilliantly explored in Derrida’s analysis, where writing finally emerges as, or in relation to the irreducible and “unconscious” inhibition that cannot be overcome—cannot be *written off*.

At issue at the moment are not Hegel’s assessments of Indian culture or Chinese culture, or for that matter Western culture, which are untenable enough—but, one must add, only *at the moment*, because such problems cannot be ignored in general. One’s assessments and hierarchies of different civilizations are a most serious matter, particularly once such hierarchies are made absolute, as in Hegel. These issues have been prominent in recent decades, leading to many significant theoretical and political developments. They are a crucial part of the political and, by now, geopolitical landscape of Hegelianism and anti-Hegelianism. Hegelianism is questioned and undermined or, conversely, reaffirmed, just as much by history—history as political practice, from local politics to geopolitics—as by the history of theory.

It is not my intention to suspend these considerations in relation to

Hegel, to his political or other—psychoanalytic, for instance—unconscious. For the moment, however, the underlying *theoretical* model is my main concern. I would contend, conversely, that *within a generally, and general economically, complementary matrix*, a *local*, textual suspension of politics, or some politics, is at times necessary, including in order to return—then, afterwards—to a possibly more effective politics. A highly complex dynamics is involved here, which also implies, of course, that suspensions of that type or of any type can never be absolutely or fully apolitical, or that they necessitate theory first and politics later. Such forms of politics are stratified and cannot, *against* Hegel, ever be fully put together, related to or determined by each other, or determined by any given political configuration, associations, affiliation, or allegiance to a political program. There are politics of theory and theories of politics that can and at times must be separated, even radically although never absolutely, demanding a complementary attitude and practice. From the history of politics and theory, too, we now know very well that nothing absolute—unity, separation, or anything else, such as absolute radicalism—is radical enough.

Hegel uses, or rather figures, different histories and geographies in order to inscribe various—ideally all—possible versions and stages of his scheme of history and, and as, knowledge. These histories and geographies serve Hegel to show how the absence of one fundamental aspect or another undermines the whole and how much needs to be overcome by *Geist* and humanity in their progress. Hegel does want to account for “World History.” He does not merely pretend; indeed, at times he may not be “consciously” pretending at all. But then again, he may be pretending to some extent: an extremely complex mind is at issue here. Furthermore, consciousness aside, the unconscious is interesting enough, including in its political dimensions. There is a profound reciprocity, and more than one, for Hegel depends not only on the *text* of the “facts” of history, but also on the ideologies that shape these facts, which according to Hegel’s ideology of History must exist.

Hegel’s mind is not so free and independent as he may believe, however. Its freedom is not defined only by its service to *Geist*, but rather by those very things that, according to Hegel, the true philosopher or historian must overcome, following *Geist*—the nonexistent *Geist*. Indian civilization has an important position in Hegel’s scheme, representing the *con-*

*tinuum* of the unconscious, although it is not the only place, space, or time onto which Hegel projects the unconscious in one way or another. Nature, as shall be seen, serves that purpose, too.

Thus, if the immediate, the immediate without mediation, is bad in Hegel's view, so also will be mediation *without—conscious—*reflection, as Rousseau's model could be characterized, so that it must have appeared quite Oriental to Hegel. As Derrida shows in *Of Grammatology*, Rousseau, too, has his geographies, specifically geographies of writing, which are inextricably connected to Hegel's geographies and indeed his histories. Rousseau *inscribes* the experience of the continuum and the dissolution of difference in presence. It is a dissolution of finitude as well: an infinitist experience to the point that even the difference between a finite continuous interval and the infinite line—between the intensive and extensive continuum—is dissolved. In this experience beyond, and before, time, such difference makes no sense.

Experience in Rousseau, however, could also be seen as a dissolution of memory, particularly as conscious memory. The latter would interrupt a kind of spontaneity, as well as presence and pleasure—*presence* and *jouissance*—that Rousseau wants. Or, to be more precise, it is a restructuring of both memory and knowledge by establishing a memory trace in a certain continuous unconscious. The experience at issue is thus an unconscious continuum of perfect transition from presence to presence. It is memory without a past and thought without knowledge. But like feeling, memories and knowledge are characterized above all by their spontaneity. Rousseau wants a kind of *feeling* knowledge and memory—an *unconscious* consciousness, an unconscious thinking. Wordsworth, perhaps following Rousseau, in the last line of "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" wrote of "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" (l. 203). "Too deep for tears" is certainly too deep for conscious knowledge; and it is important that Wordsworth here foregrounds "thoughts," not feeling, or not feeling alone. Rousseau's conception of spontaneity leads to another interesting set of contradictions and paradoxes likewise exposed in Derrida's analysis in *Of Grammatology*. "Spontaneous memory" or knowledge would be contradictory, and it is rather the *logic* of presence that forces Rousseau to claim both spontaneity and memory or knowledge and to remain blind to their contradictions.

In inscribing this presence as the unconscious, Rousseau remains the great precursor of both Nietzsche and Freud. It is not the unconscious, but presence as the model that is the problem. This problem persists all the way to Lévi-Strauss, among others, again as Derrida's analysis shows in *of Grammatology*, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's economy of schizophrenia. The question of sexuality and the question of gender, particularly in relation to the presence and pleasure, *presence* and *jouissance*, of the unconscious, remain a crucial aspect of the entire economy in Rousseau, as well as in Nietzsche and Freud, or Lacan, or again Deleuze, and of course in Hegel or, as was just indicated, Aristotle. This point concerns, interactively, their theories and metaphorizations, on the one hand, and their own unconscious—the unconscious that they cannot own—on the other.

The proximities and distances, or both at once, between different experiences, such as human and God's or *Geist's*, between Religion or Art and Science, Science and Absolute Knowledge and its "reverie," or Rousseau's reveries, entail different, and differentiated—unhomogeneous—and in any given text, relative balances between knowledge and un-knowledge, consciousness and the unconscious, successivity and spontaneity. It is perhaps impossible for a single reading to articulate the full measure of this play. There are, however, differences in balancing that can be maintained with a considerable degree of certainty, as I think occurs in Rousseau and Hegel.

Feelings, for example, will not be absent in Hegel's continuum, either, but the economy is pointedly different from Rousseau in the balance or—given how much *consciousness* is demanded—the imbalance of experience, interaction, distribution, and the priority of various faculties. That there are "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" would be even truer in Hegel than in Rousseau. *Thoughts*—not all thoughts, but the best ones—are always deeper than anything else. In Hegel, feeling would be *conscious* feelings, as it were, or feeling elevated to the level of consciousness and self-consciousness. This economy, it can be shown, is not absent in Wordsworth, either. It would perhaps be difficult to attribute absolute feeling to Absolute Knowledge. Hegel's intimation, however, the "intimation of immortality from recollections [Erinnerung] of *Geist*," could well be expressed: Absolute Knowledge is Absolute Feeling—"Thoughts that [always] lie too deep for tears."

The continuum in Rousseau would thus barely, if at all, admit self-consciousness and reflection, which he would see as inhibiting. In Hegel, the continuum is reflection and the consciousness of this reflection. As immediacy is bad for Hegel, self-consciousness is bad for Rousseau, who would see reflection as a source of rupture for more unconscious and spontaneous memory and knowledge, or language, or history, which, along with geography, is based on the same model, although again humanity resists following it. Self-consciousness violates the continuum, in every sense, rather than grounding it, and it must be removed or overcome.

Nature continues to invade Hegel's texts throughout the *Phenomenology*, often seemingly surrendering itself—or perhaps herself—to *Geist*'s and Hegel's power, always only to escape their grasp in the end. One of the key passages occurs in Hegel's analysis of *Geist* as "the Artificer" and Nature. It is also another powerful anticipation or prefiguration of the final drama of Hegel's final chapter, "Absolute Knowledge," in which *Geist* grasps its own limit—the absolute limit, the limit of limit—and becomes Absolute Knowledge. Hegel pursues the aspect or component of self-consciousness relating to the overcoming of the difference between artifice and the artificer. The issue has a major significance for the question of self-consciousness and merits separate consideration, as does the section "The Artificer" as a whole. I shall cite only Hegel's conclusion here:

In this unity of self-conscious Spirit [*Geist*] with itself, in so far as it is the shape and the object of its consciousness, its blendings with the unconscious way of the immediate shapes of Nature are purged. These monsters in shape, word, and deed are dissolved into spiritual shape: into an outer that has retreated into itself, and an inner that utters or expresses itself out of itself and in its own self; onto thought which begets itself, which is lucid existence preserving its shape in adequacy to itself. Spirit [*Geist*] is Artist [*Künstler*]. (*Phenomenology*, 424; *Werke* 3:512; translation modified)

One would expect a burst of laughter from Bataille at the sight of this self-begetting and self-consuming artificer-artifice transforming the monsters of Nature and of the unconscious—the monsters created by *Geist*, that is, by Hegel in the first place, by "reason that breeds monsters and

puts them to sleep." This shaping of monsters and labyrinths into "a lucid, intelligible" building—a cathedral of dialectic or Blake's Jerusalem—reflects the proximity of *Geist* and Hegel's own reason at the moment of the *Phenomenology*, which Hegel must maintain. The efficacy of this unity, however, is opposite to that envisaged by Hegel. *Geist* is a creation of Hegel's monsters. He cannot control the monsters of the unconscious, which invade his logic and which this logic can only breed but can never quite put to sleep. It is the reversed efficacy of Freud's *Nachträglichkeit* as the logic of the unconscious. But then again, Hegel is not, or is no longer, a patient beset by dreams, monsters, and the unconscious. "Hegel" is the name of "our" problem. We create, or dream up, the monsters of Hegel and dialectic before we put them to sleep, then play them out under (self-)analysis for the benefit of a perhaps healthier theoretical existence. But we "know," too, with a monstrous un-knowledge, that these monsters cannot be put to sleep. Monsters never sleep. Logic often does.

To take it still further, how does Hegel know that the becoming of nature is "merely a contingent movement" or that "its determinateness" is ever "simple" (492)? Even before Darwin, Hegel must have known better. Perhaps he did, to a degree, but repressed this troublesome knowledge in order to maintain the priority of *Geist* and its continuum, in the history of which organic Nature plays a subordinate, subservient—slavish—role. Nature is a slave, an erratic being, as all slaves seem to Hegel.

The issue, in the end, is this final irreducible contingency—the Nietzschean Heraclitean play—that Hegel ascribes to Nature and claims that *Geist* masters and overcomes. Nature—matter—may not be self-conscious; Hegel is logical enough on that score. Nor, as we know now, may nature, in the end, be continuous, in contrast to the Newtonian model.<sup>38</sup> Whatever it "is," however, nature makes the Hegelian historical continuum, self-consciousness, and dialectic impossible, or most severely constrains its limits—the limits of what Hegel deems unlimited. One must perhaps add, whatever it "is" or "is *not*"; for, by the same token, "matter" cannot "be" either in any sense of being developed so far in the text of philosophy—to stay with the limits suggested by Heidegger himself, from Anaximander to Heidegger, from *Being and Time* to *Time and Being*, from the first to the last book of Heidegger or philosophy. "Mat-



ter,” in this sense, is the end of dialogue and dialectic and the beginning of radical difference and a general economy and complementarity of all inscriptions, specifically the complementarity of matter, history, and the unconscious.

Radical difference may have to be, if not fully ascribed, which is impossible, then at least *related* to Nature or matter reinscribed in a deconstructed field—that is, in a general economy of matter.<sup>39</sup> Becoming, if such is the term, in the general economy will be irreducibly contingent or—perhaps a better term here—arbitrary; in other words, insofar as we can interact with this becoming, it is complementary between continuous and discontinuous, ordered and random, infinite and finite, and so forth. At its best, as in Hegel, the classical text, against itself, continuously—or again complementarily, continuously and discontinuously, randomly and purposely—generates these complementarities. Arbitrariness or contingency must thus be taken not in the sense of absolute randomness, but in the sense that no mind or spirit, no consciousness, and no unconscious, no philosophy and no deconstruction, can absolutely or unconditionally master it. It is arbitrary but never quite free, as Derrida points out in relation to Saussure and the economy of sign.

This general economy will affect and destroy, or critically suspend, the whole Hegelian economy of freedom as the economy of the political in Hegel and Hegelianism—whether idealist or materialist, such as the political economy of Marx. It can only be a question of claiming the mastery and control of this play, which in the end is perhaps always a slavish claim.

The form of becoming—“the form of free contingent happening [die Form des *freien zufälligen Geschehens*]” (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3: 591)—that Hegel denies a role in World History, may be seen, instead of *Geist*, as the efficacy of World History. History may as yet be best inscribed as effects of this “fallen [from the universal]” becoming “as contingent movement,” or rather, as neither absolutely systematic nor absolutely contingent. But what is “merely contingent” to begin with? Is such a condition ever possible? Is anything ever merely, or absolutely, contingent? The contingent—any specific contingency—is always *also* a part of one system or another, always complementary to the systemic, except that contingencies can never be unified or synchronized together in or fully controlled by one such system, a fact that in turn necessitates a general economy and the many complementarities of the contingent.

Hegel may not be, or may claim not to be, concerned with this “unconscious” movement of time and history, which is irrelevant to World History. But he cannot, in all rigor, ignore the unconscious. Even his world history will depend on the unconscious and its general economy, let alone that history for which “world history” is much more suitable, except that, as a result, one is better off by giving the name “*world history*” up altogether. This “history” *includes* all these “Africas,” “Indias,” and “Siberias” that must be *excluded* by Hegel. It has at once both more and less wholeness than Hegel’s World History. We must attribute both more and less than Hegel and all philosophy’s—or anti-philosophy’s—“reveries” hitherto to becoming, nature, and history.

### *Continuums Discontinued: Irreverences*

Absolute Knowledge becomes in every sense the *ideal realization* of the model that teleologically governs all history, and the ideality of realization is no contradiction of terms for Hegel. This theoretical move, as much as naming or not naming with a given name such as ‘time,’ or the annulment or the end of time in Absolute Knowledge, is a classical strategy. It takes complex shape in Hegel, of course, and for good reason: it is difficult—in truth impossible—to relate or correlate the presence and consciousness of *Geist* and the unconscious of history. The defining strategy becomes the reliance on the model itself as the grounding model, whether it is seen as realizable or not and whether it operates overtly or explicitly. From Plato and Aristotle to Husserl and Heidegger, this reliance characterizes a totality to which Derrida gives such names as metaphysics of presence, logocentrism, and ontotheology.

The task of the general economy insofar as presence is concerned is, let me reiterate, not to eliminate presence but to refigure its functioning and limits. At issue is what can be said—or *written*—about presence and representation or, conversely, about difference; or how it can be said; or what cannot be said and claimed, once one wants to—or, given various closures, must—speak about them. Models of presence cannot be dismissed for many reasons, historical, theoretical, and political. In question is the difference in the conditions and limits of their possibility and necessity and the value ascribed to them and to presence itself. Throughout the history of the metaphysics of presence, these efficacies are the fundamen-

tal and highest ground to which presence is always attributed, whether they are unnamed or appear under the name of time, history, absolute knowledge, continuum, or still others; even though names and attribution are important, too, and at times decisive. In a general economy one cannot uniquely attribute presence or anything else to the efficacy of presence or difference. In turn, the *absolute* annulment of time, or presence, or other things claimed to be annulled becomes no more possible than claiming them as grounding structures or transcendental signifiers or signifieds.

Althusser defines the classical model at issue here as that of "the homogeneous continuity of time":

(1) The homogeneous continuity of time. The homogeneous continuity of time is the reflection in existence of the continuity of the dialectical development of the Idea. Time can thus be treated as a continuum *in which* the dialectical continuity of the process of the development of the Idea is manifest. On this level, then, the whole problem of the science of history would consist of the division of this continuum according to a *periodization* corresponding to the succession of one dialectical totality after another. The moments of the Idea exist in the number of historical *periods* into which the time continuum is to be accurately divided. In this Hegel was merely thinking in his own theoretical problematic the number one problem of the historian's practice, the problem Voltaire, for example, expressed when he distinguished between the age of Louis XIV and the age of Louis XV; it is still the major problem of modern historiography.

(2) The contemporaneity of time, or the category of the historical *present*. This second category is the condition of the possibility of the first one, and in it we find Hegel's central thought. If historical time is the existence of the social totality we must be precise about the structure of this existence. The fact that the relation between the social totality and its historical existence is a relation with an *immediate* existence implies that this relation is itself *immediate*. In other words: the structure of historical existence is such that all the elements of the whole always co-exist in one and the same time, one and the same present, and are therefore contemporaneous with one another in one and the same present. (*Reading Capital*, 94; *Lire le Capital* 2, 39)

Althusser's analysis is very effective, particularly in seeing the category of the historical present and by implication presence in general as determining the whole framework of Hegel, including as the framework of the whole, the Whole which is the True. The continuum of time is, furthermore, only a "reflection in existence" of the continuum of the Idea, which is Hegel's later version of the configuration of the *Phenomenology*. Althusser then proceeds to juxtapose the Hegelian totality, determined and structured by "metaphoric causality," to the Marxian totality, or what he defines via Jakobson and Lacan as "metonymic" or "structural" causality. The latter, according to Althusser, is in fact introduced by Marx and as such constitutes "Marx's immense theoretical revolution."

The passage also shows the significance of the model itself, permeating in one way or another our thinking about history throughout the history of this thinking. It will be returned, in the end, to its more classical, metaphysical role by Althusser's reading of Marx and the ensuing politico-historical matrix as well. As in Heidegger, this reinstatement occurs at a different level, which is an important qualification, but it does take place nonetheless.<sup>40</sup>

Althusser also correctly points to "the whole problem of the science of history," on the one hand, and "the major problem of modern historiography," on the other. One would in fact have to speak of politics or rhetoric or ethics or poetics, moving again via Aristotle's titles that still shape the structure and politics of our institutions of knowledge; and when Althusser speaks of "historical time," very general considerations of temporality are clearly implied. Aristotle, as we have seen, could have more claims than anyone else on the continuum model itself, which Hegel only modifies, however original many of his other conceptions are. But then, these conceptions produce the *Hegelian* model as a model of *history* and *consciousness*—a model of great power and originality.

The differences in the levels and domains of the model's functioning are important, for problematic as the model is at the level of historical or psychological time, it has been extremely effective elsewhere. Within its deconstructed and refigured limits, it is effective in the theory and practice of history and politics as well. What Althusser urges is not to dismiss relevant classical models, even in their most Hegelian aspects, but to understand the limits of their functioning and applicability. "Continuums" do work as models, as in mathematics or physics. Their founda-

tion there, however, is not quite what classical logic or theories had expected it to be. That deconstruction in turn leads to refiguring the conditions of their possibility and necessity there and refiguring why and how mathematics or the exact sciences that depend on mathematics work. One can trace these connections to the “formal” and mathematical aspects of the model in Althusser and the French landscape at that time by way of general systems and information theory, cybernetics, and related developments.

No less important throughout the history of Marxism has been a reversed question—that of the role of dialectic in the natural sciences and mathematics, to the point of claiming dialectic as the fundamental philosophical ground for them. This claim is itself a Hegelian gesture, inevitable in Marxism, insofar as the latter remains dialectic. The gesture, as we have seen, has been repeated, although with important differences, in Husserl and Heidegger, who both saw “the crisis of European science,” to use Husserl’s title, to be its denying or forgetting its ultimate philosophical foundations. In Marxist history, the issue has been most prominent in the context of Engels’s *Anti-Dühring*. The question was specifically discussed, *in the context of the continuum*—a term and concept as important for Bataille as for Althusser—in Bataille’s essay “The Critique of the Foundations of Hegelian Dialectics.” Bataille argues against applying dialectic beyond the historical and politico-economic domain; at the very least he argues for rigorously testing its limits and shows the problems of uncritically applying it to mathematics and exact sciences. In accord with much of the present analysis, Bataille considers the developments in both modern physics and mathematics to be undermining dialectic and the very foundation upon which dialectic itself is built in very radical terms. It may be recalled here that Zeno is considered the founder of dialectic, and he has a very important place in the history of the question of the continuum.

At issue at the moment, however, are the limits of dialectic in our understanding of historical and political, or politico-economic fields, including a materialist economy. Dialectic cannot be decoupled from presence and the continuum, in the broader sense of the metaphysics of presence, in which, however, mathematics is profoundly implicated as a model by virtue of its significance in the history of the question. Mathematics and formal logic, however, can be decoupled from dialectic. In

the end, dialectic, idealist or materialist, may have to be removed—rigorously subtracted—from the inscription of the historical and the political as well. Its role there may be far more restricted than Bataille's essay suggests. Material history may be irreducibly constrained against dialectic, particularly as the restricted economy of consciousness. As a result, there can be no dialectic of the unconscious; that is, a dialectical economy of the unconscious can only be a restricted economy. "History," "matter," and "the unconscious" in a general economy severely restrict the limits of dialectic and demand instead their own complementarity figured in the general economic field.

Dialectic and *Aufhebung* remain a difference in the service of infinity and the continuum, and thus presence—the service that this difference cannot of course quite deliver. The model of differential calculus is, as we have seen, a part of Hegel's philosophical consciousness and, in more interesting ways, the unconscious. Consciously, Hegel, as later Husserl would do, sees the transcendental logic he develops—the logic of *Aufhebung*—as comprehending the formal logic of mathematics, including differential calculus. Unconsciously, Hegel may have been troubled by the impossibility of maintaining a rigorous difference between them—that is, along these *lines*, the lines of presence and the continuum, for, as we have seen, there are crucial other differences between mathematical logic and Hegel's logic. Indeed such dimensions of logic as temporality and intersubjectivity, explored by Hegel, must be taken into the account and in fact further radicalized—made general economic—rather than conversely, as Hegel does, trying to keep them within the limits of presence, the continuum, consciousness, and self-consciousness.

As suggested earlier, it is perhaps only in mathematics that the logic of the continuum can be applied in full rigor. As we now know but which Hegel could not know, even there it operates within a very different and more complex economy of foundations than understood by classical philosophy as the metaphysics of presence; and these foundations have remained the subject of continuous questioning throughout this century. The difference between the fields, on which Hegel insists, would, however, have to be configured differently, utilizing, again differently from Hegel, other Hegelian distinctions, such as self-referentiality. Allowing for mathematical specificity, one could say that the mathematics of the continuum does depend on the same metaphorical model that underlies the concep-

tions of philosophy. These conceptions, however, have in turn depended on the mathematical model of continuity and temporal continuity. Such interactions are reciprocal throughout the history of the model at issue. But then Kant, too, depended on both Newton and Leibniz, and so forth, all the way back to Euclid, who depended on Aristotle, and then . . . . This is an interminable chain. There is still the question of the anxiety of influence regarding Descartes, Newton, Leibniz, and several others, as thinkers whose power must have troubled both Hegel's consciousness and his unconscious. The case of Hegel might be *analyzed* from this perspective as well.

To this model Bataille's 'continuum' has a relation of both proximity and difference, more, I think, of difference than proximity, actually—to the model in general and specifically to Hegel and the question of meaning and communication that Bataille's reading opened. As Derrida argues, in his chain Bataille radically displaces classical concepts, specifically the continuum:

The *continuum* is the privileged experience of a sovereign operation transgressing the limit of discursive difference. But—and here we are touching upon, as concerns the movement of sovereignty, the point of greatest ambiguity and greatest instability—this *continuum* is not the plenitude of meaning or of presence, as this plenitude is *envisaged* by metaphysics. Pushing itself toward the nonbasis of negativity and of expenditure, the experience of the *continuum* is also the experience of absolute difference, of a difference which would no longer be the one that Hegel had conceived more profoundly than anyone else: the difference in the service of presence, at work for (the) history (of meaning). The difference between Hegel and Bataille is the difference between these two differences. This enables one to dispel the equivocality which might weigh upon the concepts of *communication*, *continuum*, or *instant*. These concepts, which *seem to be identical* to each other like the accomplishing of presence, in fact mark and sharpen the incision of difference. "A fundamental principle is expressed as follows: 'communication' cannot take place from one full and intact being to another: it requires beings who have put the being within themselves *at stake*, have placed it at the limit of death, of nothingness" (*Sur Nietzsche*). And the *instant*—the temporal mode of the sovereign operation—is not a *point* of full and

unpenetrated presence: it slides and *eludes* us between two presences; it is difference as the affirmative elusion of presence. It does not give itself but is *stolen*, carries itself off in a movement which is simultaneously one of violent effraction and of vanishing flight. The instant is the *furtive*: "Un-knowledge implies at once fundamentally anguish, but also the suppression of anguish. Henceforth, it becomes possible furtively to undergo the furtive experience that I call the experience of the instant" (*Conferences sur le Non-savoir*). (*Writing and Difference*, 263; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 386–87)<sup>41</sup>

Bataille's continuum suggests, then, a ruptured and inhibited efficacy of the continuum and communication. As Derrida points out:

Sovereignty is absolute when it is absolved of every relationship, and keeps itself in the night of the secret. The *continuum* of sovereign communication has as its milieu this night of secret difference. One would understand nothing about it in thinking that there was some contradiction between these two requisites. In fact, one would understand only that which is understood in the logic of philosophical lordship: because for this logic, on the contrary, one must conciliate the desire for recognition, the breaking of secrecy, discourse, collaboration, etc., with discontinuity, articulation, and negativity. The opposition of the continuous and the discontinuous is constantly displaced from Hegel to Bataille. (*Writing and Difference*, 266–67; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 391)<sup>42</sup>

The logic of opposition is thus also displaced toward the logic of complementarity and undecidability, here most specifically those of continuity and rupture, as against the continuum, dialectic, *Aufhebung*, whether what is at issue is history, language, interpretation, or communication.

The question of this displacement of the continuum has—in the shadow of Hegel, Rousseau, Nietzsche, and several other figures—been a major concern for Derrida and deconstruction, and particularly for de Man. It is worth considering briefly at this juncture one of de Man's best-known passages, closing "Shelley Disfigured" and anticipating or correlative to de Man's later approaches to Hegel. The essay was originally published along with Derrida's reading of Blanchot in "Living On: Border Lines" in *Deconstruction and Criticism*. De Man writes:



What *would* be naive is to believe that this strategy [of historical monumentalization], which is not *our* strategy as subjects, since we are its product rather than its agent, can be a source of value and has to be celebrated or denounced accordingly.

Whenever this belief occurs—and it occurs all the time—it leads to a misreading that can and should be discarded, unlike the coercive “forgetting” that Shelley’s poem analytically thematized and that stands beyond good and evil. It would be of little use to enumerate and categorize the various forms and names which this belief takes on in our present critical and literary scene. It functions along monotonously predictable lines, by the historicization and the aesthetification of texts, as well as by their use, as in this essay, for the assertion of methodological claims made all the more pious by their denial of piety. Attempts to define, to understand, or to circumscribe romanticism in relation to ourselves and in relation to other literary movements are all part of this naive belief. *The Triumph of Life* warns us that nothing, whether deed, word, thought, or text, ever happens in relation, positive or negative, to anything that precedes, follows, or exists elsewhere, but only as a random event whose power, like the power of death, is due to the randomness of its occurrence. It also warns us why and how these events then have to be reintegrated in a historical and aesthetic system of recuperation that repeats itself regardless of the exposure of its fallacy. This process differs entirely from the recuperative and nihilistic allegories of historicism. If it is true and unavoidable that any reading is a monumentalization of sorts, the way in which Rousseau is read and disfigured in *The Triumph of Life* puts Shelley among the few readers who “guessed whose statue those fragments had composed.” Reading as disfiguration, to the very extent that it resists historicism, turns out to be historically more reliable than the products of historical archeology. To monumentalize this observation into a *method* of reading would be to regress from the rigor exhibited by Shelley which is exemplary precisely because it refuses to be generalized into a system. (*The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, 122–23)

It might as yet be that what “Shelley’s poem analytically thematizes,” or rather what it can be made to thematize analytically, and “what stands beyond good and evil,” is a kind of economy that is not fully perceived by

de Man, for whatever reasons—theoretical, historical, allegorical, or ironic. The allusion to Nietzsche could indicate the necessity of pursuing such an economy, that is, a general economy and complementarity of history.

The economy of history emerging here is clearly anti-Hegelian, and is also quite different from Heidegger's vision of history, but it is shifted too asymmetrically toward rupture and randomness, rather than offering the sufficiently plural, complementary historical interplay of continuity and rupture, randomness and causality, and other oppositional pairs that may and must be engaged. Or rather, de Man in fact suggests here, throughout this essay and also in his other writings, various complementary modes of historical analysis and descriptions—for example, the allegorical and the ironic—and these must in turn be further diversified. But then, de Man cannot in all rigor make the kind of claim he advances: “[N]othing, whether deed, word, thought, or text, ever happens in relation, positive or negative, to anything that precedes, follows, or exists elsewhere, but only as a random event whose power, like the power of death, is due to the randomness of its occurrence.” Death, too, as I have pointed out, is a complementary event, more often random in its effects, but not always and indeed rarely only so, and certainly much more multiple and multiperspectival. Thus both “death” and “history” demand complementarity of chance and necessity and a general economy of (re)presentation and closure as indicated earlier, whatever irreducible discontinuities they, particularly “death,” may entail.

It is indicative that neither ‘general economy’ nor ‘closure’ figures either in de Man’s own works or in his commentaries on Derrida. One cannot make the kind of claim that de Man posits here about the efficacy of the processes at issue. In “Sign and Symbol of Hegel’s *Aesthetics*,” de Man in fact reads Hegel’s dialectics as the allegory of the discontinuous, or rather, as in Shelley’s case, he sees the allegoric economy of the discontinuous as productive of synthesis and continuity. Derrida’s comments on de Man’s essay are clearly applicable to the end of “Shelley Disfigured” as well:

To radicalize by accelerating this matter, one could say that the entire Hegelian dialectic is a vast allegory. Paul de Man does not put it in this

way, but he sees in Hegelianism a specific allegory; not, as is often believed, the allegory of synthesizing and reconciliatory power, but that of disjunction, dissociation, and discontinuity. It is the power of allegory, and its ironic force as well, to say something quite different from and even contrary to what seems to be intended through it. And since this allegory is what made possible [according to de Man?], before and after Hegel, the construction of even the concept of history, philosophy of history and history of philosophy, one should no longer rely on something like history (in the philosophical sense of the word "history") to account for this "allegoricity." The usual concept of history is itself one of its effects; it bears its mark and stamp (*estampille*). (*Memoires for Paul de Man*, 74)

In spite of his "acceleration," Derrida's subtle differences from de Man are quite interesting and are indicative of the differences between the two economies at issue—the general economy of *différance* and de Man's economy of allegory, or allegory-irony. The efficacy of all the effects at issue here needs a more general economic and complementary approach. We certainly need to see Hegelian dialectic and its efficacy as the interplay of various effects of that type; and we cannot suspend Hegel's own claim on synthesis, continuity, and presence—for example, in the passages on death in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* cited earlier—or subordinate them unequivocally, as de Man to a degree does, to the efficacy or allegory of the discontinuous.<sup>43</sup> For even leaving aside the question of the rigor of Hegel's text, these dimensions of Hegel's thinking relate to an important complementary component of the processes at issue. As I have stressed from the outset, we need indeed "vast[er] allegor[ies]" and "ironies," together with many other tropes, and a radically complementary interplay between or among them. From Aristotle to Hegel, to Heidegger and beyond, inside and outside philosophy, for example, in mathematics and physics, from Newton, or again, from Aristotle to Riemann and Einstein, the continuum is itself a vast and indispensable allegory, even though the conception and its history carry within themselves ironies that the theories and ideologies of continuity would like to, but cannot, avoid.

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida defines the model of the continuum at issue as "the model of the line":

The "line" represents only a particular model, whatever might be its privilege. This model *has become* a model and, as a model, it remains inaccessible. If one allows that the linearity of language entails this vulgar and mundane concept of temporality (homogeneous, dominated by the form of the now and the ideal of continuous movement, straight or circular) which Heidegger shows to be the intrinsic determining concept of all ontology from Aristotle to Hegel, the meditation upon writing and the deconstruction of the history of philosophy become inseparable." (*Of Grammatology*, 86; *De la grammatologie*, 128)

The continuum is thus postulated by the metaphysics of presence rather than rigorously accessed. Rigor—*now*—would lead to *writing*, deconstruction, and then reinscription—re-configuration—of the functioning of presence and the metaphysics of presence, including the philosophy of history and the history of philosophy. The famous Hegelian spirals are also based on this "ideal of continuous movement," in this instance, as the combination of the straight and the circular. One must also pursue, therefore, a general critique of the very concept of accessibility, from its most formal aspects to the question of politics.

In his analysis, Derrida shows that "the line" has been perhaps the most prominent and persistent model throughout the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence, or any history in which temporality may be involved: science, linguistics, psychoanalysis, literature, literary criticism and theory, and their multiple interactions. The model thus becomes a general condition of reduction of difference and exteriority in presence, as in Hegel, where it takes place in the name of the "*annulling of Time*." As Derrida suggests, the Hegelian economy may still be as far as one can go on this road, in spite of Heidegger's claims for the philosophy of temporality as the ontology of Being in *Being and Time*.

Derrida follows Heidegger in his account of the pervasiveness of the model, but with the crucial difference between the restricted and the general economy of presence: the restricted form is that of an absolutely grounding, and governing, position and the absolutely superior value of presence in Heidegger, whose own concepts thus remain solidary with the metaphysics of presence, while the second, general economic form, is that of the closure of presence and the metaphysics of presence in Derrida. If

there is a "solidarity" with philosophy and its history in Derrida, it must be established otherwise, through a relation to deconstruction that differs from the relation deconstruction itself has to the metaphysics of presence, possibly joining them under the rubric of the metaphysics of closure.

The discussion in *Of Grammatology* contains a footnote to "*Ousia* and *Grammē*," where, however, Heidegger's critique of a "vulgar concept of time" and the concept itself are put to work against Heidegger. After a meticulous analysis, Derrida concludes "that perhaps there is no 'vulgar concept of time' [Il n'y a peut-être pas de 'concept vulgaire du temps']" (*Margins*, 63; *Marges*, 73). Insofar as Heidegger remains within this history, and—to focus on the core of the argument—insofar as he *wants* to remain within and maintain the value of the framework of presence and the presencing of presence, as he does throughout his text, he cannot exceed Hegel or Aristotle: "The concept of time, in all its aspects, belongs to metaphysics, and it names the domination of presence. . . . In attempting to produce this *other* concept, one rapidly would come to see that it is constructed out of other metaphysical or ontotheological predicates" (*Margins*, 63; *Marges*, 73). Heidegger's very critique of Hegel and Aristotle becomes problematic as a result, both in relation to the general model of presence and, technically, with respect to the propositions that are "difficult simply to attribute to Hegel" (*Margins*, 63; *Marges*, 73). Heidegger's own conception is no less, and no more, "vulgar" or "mundane" than Hegel's or Aristotle's.

One is led instead to reconsider such terms and concepts as "vulgar," "naive," "ordinary," "everyday" language and thinking, as opposed to "refined" philosophical thinking, and thus to reconsider the latter as well. Such a reconsideration would not eliminate the differences in functioning of language or the value of a more refined conception. These matters indeed require the most refined thinking. There is Nietzsche's "naivete," for example—a rather refined thing: "the ideal of a spirit [*Geist*] who plays naively," but with which "*great seriousness* [*der große Ernst*] really begins" (*The Gay Science*, 347; *KSA* 3:637). There is a refined naivete, and there is a naive refinement; in the end, Heidegger's conceptions may not be refined enough. "*Mundane time*" can perhaps never be reduced, even by the most refined phenomenology of consciousness. The concept itself—of "*mundane time*"—may need to be refined to the point of no

longer being a concept, thus going well beyond the ultimately *vulgar* concept of “mundane time” offered by phenomenology, from Hegel to Husserl and Heidegger. *Within* the model, and maintaining the highest value of presence, philosophy cannot do much better than Aristotle; it is possible that, historically speaking, philosophy, its theory and politics, could not have been practiced outside this model or without this privileging.

Nor, if one wants to or must maintain this model, can one do any better in linguistics. As we have seen, in “The Pit and the Pyramid” Derrida demonstrates that Saussure’s linguistics, together with other forms of linguistics, is Hegelian in this sense and thus constitutes a form of phenomenology. There are, it must be pointed out, crucial historical dimensions of Saussure’s text, which Derrida invokes in “Différance” in inscribing *différance* and its radical historicity (*Margins*, 11–12), while at the same time deconstructing both Saussure and Hegel. That historical connection would extend Hegel’s shadow over Saussure.<sup>44</sup>

Derrida’s grammatology—as the “science” of writing—is advanced as much against phenomenology as against linguistics, the science of speech and writing as the representation of speech. But in fact phenomenology, too, is a science of speech—of the voice. It is always, finally, the question of *voice*—“the voice that keeps silent,” as Derrida describes it in his reading of Husserl in *Speech and Phenomena*. The voice of internal speech proves to be writing after all; and so do “the voice of Being” in Heidegger, and many other voices, permeating the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence and, and as, the metaphysics of voice. The voice [*phonē*] is always subject to the linearity and homogeneity of presence and the continuum. “This linearism is undoubtedly inseparable from phonologism” (*Of Grammatology*, 72; *De la grammatologie*, 105)—in linguistics as well as philosophy.

Presence, historically, has always been the presence of and proximity to “voice”; and the conjunction of linearity and phonologism is a crucial part of the restricted economy of all philosophical determinations by way of presence and linear temporality. In philosophy it is also the relationship between the model of presence and the experience of consciousness: from the consciousness of time itself, “the phenomenology of the internal time consciousness,” to the homogeneous continuity of thinking and history. Derrida concludes then:

It is precisely these concepts that permitted the exclusion of writing: image or representation, sensible and intelligible, nature and culture, nature and technics, etc. They are solidary with all metaphysical conceptuality and particularly with naturalist, objectivist, and derivative determination of the difference between outside and inside.

And above all with a "vulgar concept of time." I borrow this expression from Heidegger. It designates, at the end of *Being and Time*, a concept of time thought in terms of spatial movement or of the now, and dominating all philosophy from Aristotle's *Physics* to Hegel's *Logic*. This concept which determines all of classical ontology, was not born out of a philosopher's carelessness or from a theoretical lapse. It is intrinsic to the totality of the history of the Occident, of what unites its metaphysics and its technics. . . .

What is here in question is not Saussure's affirmation of the temporal essence of discourse but the concept of time that guides this affirmation and analysis: time conceived as linear successivity, as "consecutivity." (*Of Grammatology*, 71–72; *De la grammatologie*, 104–5)

This determination is no doubt "general" and, in great measure, inevitable. It continues to function well beyond Hegel, and once again it must do so, *differently*, in the critical text as well, necessitating a complex economy of closure, or complementary closures. In this sense, Derrida's reference to "the *totality* of the history of the Occident" is not out of order in delineating the field of the metaphysics of presence and its conceptual and historical, or political, power and domination, wherever it operates, whether inside or outside philosophy. The phrase itself might be a bit excessive, given the massive undermining of this power enacted by Derrida and others. Even given the inevitability of "presence," this totality would be ruptured by the difference between the discourse of philosophy, such as Hegel's and Heidegger's, and discourse, if not outside, in the margins of philosophy, such as in Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, Lacan, and Derrida. These remarks still suspend the difference between and within each of these texts, which would further differentiate the field.

"Presence," as was indicated earlier, or something close enough to it, is an ineluctable psychological, or even physiological condition, let us say, of "life"—life as *différance*, for example. It may even be a necessary compensation for "the unconscious," as Nietzsche, Freud, and Derrida

suggest. Hence the closure of presence. We cannot quite do without presence either or, complementary to it, difference, or other complementary pairs and clusters, such as exteriority and interiority or infinity and finitude. Once necessary, presence or—and at times as—difference can and often must also be utilized as a strategy, as part of the active forgetting, in the practice of theory, history, or politics. But we cannot *base*, unconditionally or absolutely, things such as history or interpretation on presence or difference. That may *only* mean that there can be no *absolute* base of any kind, but much follows from this impossibility.

From Socrates to Heidegger, via the inescapable Hegel, the power of “presence” or “difference,” metaphysically conceived,<sup>45</sup> has forced philosophy to see it as the fundamental ground of history, interpretation, or theory and to supply it with a kind of “*legislative*” power, attributing to it the good, the true, and the proper in Derrida’s general sense of the metaphysics of presence as the metaphysics of the proper (*propre*). In Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, this legislative power of presence, consciousness and self-consciousness, and dialectic is extended into the field of law.<sup>46</sup> That extension would lead, via Nietzsche, to the following conclusion of tremendous theoretical, and perhaps political, importance: there is no fundamental or immediate—present—connection between “presence” and “theory,” such as “philosophy,” “history,” “morality,” or “politics.” The text of philosophy has never succeeded in sustaining claims of that kind. Even if we assume, as perhaps we must, the necessity of “presence” or “difference” itself, there may be only multiple and radically mediated connections that cannot be subject to controlled mediation. The disruption of this fundamental link, and claims it entails, is the starting point of Nietzsche’s critique or attack, which is the “genre” of *Genealogy*, on philosophy, morality, religion, or just about everything, since the configurations and claims that link presence and *the law* extend well beyond the history of philosophy. These configurations make philosophy possible and possibly necessary, posing the question of relationships between the inevitability of presence and a “theory,” such as philosophy, *as* the metaphysics of presence, along with the necessity of one’s interminable engagement with the text of philosophy. Then, too, terms such as “the philosopher’s carelessness” and “theoretical lapse” are not entirely out of order; and Nietzsche, as opposed to Derrida, would not have hesitated to



use such, or much stronger, terms—for reasons similar to those explored by Derrida and accompanying his critique by equally sustained rigor.

“The enigmatic model of the *line* is thus the very thing that philosophy could not see when it had its eyes open on the interior of its own history” (*Of Grammatology*, 86; *De la grammatologie*, 128). This is a complex blindness, the blindness of different insights. For, as would follow from Derrida’s own analysis, the model would not only have been seen, but was also *invented*, or co-invented, by philosophy. Even if the line—the continuum—is not always allowed to be accessible to human experience, it is nevertheless considered desirable, and human experiences that are accorded the highest value are defined by the closest proximity to it. The difference or relationship between the two types of accessibility—to the rigor of theory or to “actual” or “ideal” experience—is itself a crucial issue in this history. Hegel, for whom the two must merge, remains a major case. What gives so much power to the deconstruction of philosophy, however, is that philosophy would not see the *role* of this model and the conditions of its possibility, desirability, or necessity that *come to light* through the optics of general economy. That constitutes an enormous difference, a difference *in configuring difference* and the *différance* of this difference between two differences. One should not be deceived by the ironies of Derrida’s metaphors, which have always served philosophy, and much else, to *blind* themselves. These metaphors are persistent in *Of Grammatology* and are used within the closure of presence and the closure of philosophy and in order to deconstruct philosophy.

Derrida’s idea of relating the problematics at issue to writing is a brilliant discovery and an enormously powerful technique—*technē*, *writing*. As Derrida shows, historically, everything that threatened the continuum—“a universal and convenient time of speech”—would usually be transferred by metaphysics onto writing. Conversely, the “nuclear traits of all [written and spoken] writing [traits nucléaire de toute écriture]” (*Margins*, 316; *Marges*, 376), which Derrida relates to the irreducible *structural* unconscious, could be shown to function in all interpretation, memory, and history. They constitute the efficacy of presence and the—unconscious—desire for presence—or difference. Heidegger, Hegel, Rousseau, and many others throughout this history, from Socrates on or even before him, are aware of and struggle against “contamination” by *writing*. Writing is seen

as a symptom of a great danger, even *the* danger. Conversely, in deconstruction, the repression of writing is seen as a symptom, but, as *against* metaphysics, without giving *writing*—which is never unitary—or pure, uncontaminated, healthy, proper—status.

The (re)establishment—final, original, or intermediate—of the continuum is what *writing* makes impossible, as it also makes them possible in the sense that it is *writing* that produces them. “*Différance* produces what it forbids, makes possible the very thing that it makes impossible [La différence produit ce qu’elle interdit, rend possible cela même qu’elle rend impossible]” (*Of Grammatology*, 143; *De la grammatologie*, 206).

Under the ineluctable conditions of *writing*, the difference between a metaphysical and a critical text will be rather in the economies—restricted or general—of repression and the *inscription* of writing. A given text can be stratified so as to be read as metaphysical and critical at once. Indeed, writing, “the repressed,” continuously, although often enough imperceptibly, returns—for example, as “the metaphor in the text of philosophy”—from Socrates on. When he describes thinking, Socrates, “he who does not write,” continually relies in his thinking on the metaphor of writing, or painting, which is condemned in the same gesture. The metaphor is supposed to function as a bridge to the truth and presence. This possibility, as Derrida shows in “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,” is another crucial, defining, assumption of philosophy, including in Hegel, who does write, who perhaps only writes. In his latter years, Hegel, we recall, was only reading his *written* lectures, which is not to say, however, that his “reading” would always correspond to a written text, and particularly available transcripts. Hegel writes. But so does Socrates in the end, through the *mediation* of Plato’s *writing* and through the irreducible writing of his own speech and thinking—always, all the time. The bridge to truth and presence can *in truth* never be crossed.

Nor, as corollary, can one *in truth* maintain that time can be annulled, whether by way of some ideal temporality of ideal atemporality, such as the continuum of Absolute Knowledge in Hegel, which is purported fully to contain difference in presence. Temporality can perhaps be “annulled” only in the sense of moving to a theoretical economy of more radically disruptive transformations that cannot be grasped by any form of temporality based on presence and continuum. Or rather, such transformations

will have to be both *more radically disruptive* and *more radically productive*, involving more complex organizations—more complex ruptures and more complex continuums, or other complementarities, or still other things—of which philosophy could never dream, or could only dream in its secret nightmares. Indeed, as we have seen at the outset of this analysis, the epistemological lesson of modern physics had offered very much something of that kind; and we could expect still more complex surprises from “matter.” Who knows what, for example, a theory of quantum gravity is going to look like—mathematically, experimentally, conceptually, or metaphorically, and much can come from elsewhere in science, or other fields.

The annulment at stake would expand immensely that which is to be annulled by Hegel’s *Aufhebung* in Absolute Knowledge. Under these conditions, one would not be able to, and need not, claim the absolute erasure of the term “time.” The latter becomes inscribed in the transformational economy of nomination and retains its local and often pervasive, but never irreducible role. Conversely, to equate the unconscious with temporality may be tempting, but the theoretical economy of that type—general economy—does not seem to lend itself to such an equation or any unique correlation of that type. A general economy cannot be uniquely presented as or related to either the unconscious or time in any form, above all, that of presence. This play may not be either temporal or unconscious, however much one might need to rely on such old terms, or on new terms, such as *différance* or play, and however much one needs, at certain stages, to reverse traditional hierarchies, or to deconstruct and complementarize them.

It would follow that all spatiality and temporality must be seen as *différance* in the general economy and, particularly but not exclusively, as the *différance* of each other and thus in practice always a complementarity of each other. This general economy and this complementarity imply, among other things, that all temporality, or all spatiality, of time or spatiality—or temporality—of space, their common grounds, or grounds, their possible syntheses, their differences, and their *différance* will emerge differently each time and at each space. At the same *time*, and in the same *space*—which are, however, never quite the same under these conditions—the effects of continuity, similarity, or identity, which locally can be irreducible, would have to be accounted for. Differences can never

be claimed to be reduced or controlled, but there are always configurations where the force of difference is diminished greatly. Hence, for Derrida, *différance* always connotes the differential play of spatial and temporal linguistic and conceptual productions, as “it” *disseminates* into both temporal and spatial terms. *Dissemination* is in turn one of the terms in this play, which Derrida opposes to “polysemy” as *controlled* plurality or ambiguity, such that of *Aufhebung*. *Dissemination* points out that it is never quite the “same *différance*” of the same thing, the same “it,” and that these transformations cannot be seen under any unified, global, or unconditional control.

In constituting itself, in dividing itself dynamically, this interval is what might be called *spacing*, the becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space (*temporization*). And it is this constitution of the present, as an “originary” and irreducibly nonsimple (and therefore *stricto sensu* nonoriginary) synthesis of marks, or traces of retentions and protentions (to reproduce analogically and provisionally a phenomenological and transcendental language that soon will reveal itself to be inadequate), that I propose to call archi-writing, archi-trace, or *différance*. Which (is) (simultaneously) spacing (and) temporization.” (*Margins*, 13; *Marges*, 13–14)

The point is reiterated, with important nuances, earlier in the essay (*Margins*, 8; *Marges*, 8) and in *Of Grammatology*, where *spacing* as “the articulation of space *and* time” is related to the—in turn deconstructed—unconscious: “*spacing* (notice that this word speaks the articulation of space and time, the becoming-space of time and the becoming-time of space) is always the unperceived, the non-present, and the non-conscious. . . . Spacing as writing is the becoming-absent and becoming-unconscious of the subject” (*Of Grammatology*, 68–69; *De la grammatologie*, 99–100).

This complementarization of spatiality and temporality must be accompanied by a deconstruction and reinscription of *metaphysical* subjectivity, conscious and unconscious alike: “Constituting and dislocating it at the same time, writing is other than the subject, in whatever sense the latter is understood. Writing can never be thought under the category of the subject; however it is modified, however it is endowed with consciousness or unconsciousness, it will refer, by the entire thread of its history, to

the substantiality of a presence unperturbed by accidents, or to the identity of the selfsame in the presence of self-relationships [l'identité du propre dans la présence du rapport à soi]" (*Of Grammatology*, 68–69; *De la grammatologie*, 100). Short of this deconstruction and recomprehending complementarization, the differentiations of the "space" effects, or the "time" effects, or "space-time" and "time-space" effects, would never sufficiently undermine the classical scheme.

In this sense, the "name" *différance* may, but should not, be misleading in spite of Derrida's efforts to disseminate the names and metaphors. In a way, Derrida does not, and cannot, differentiate his names as much as *différance* demands. But that "reduction" does not mean that *différance* fully controls the transformations, even in a given field; by definition, Derrida claims the opposite. Rather, there emerges a class of related configurations—around Derrida's cluster, by definition open, but in practice not unlimited—such as the metaphysics of presence, which may be explored and deconstructed by working with this cluster. One can move beyond these names and problems, for there are always other things to explore, however comprehensive a matrix is, or seems to be, at a given moment.

Since for Hegel the metaphor is reducible, this mutual inhibition of names would not constitute a problem. Hegel, as we have seen, knows that he has to rely on spatial, temporal, and other metaphors on the way to the truth of *Geist*, as metaphors themselves "die" along the way. In "White Mythology" Derrida invokes two deaths of metaphor: one in the sense of philosophy, as the erasure of metaphors on the way to truth, and the other as their death in the sense of their irreducibility. In this latter sense, metaphor "dies" because one cannot stop further metaphorizing, cannot contain the limit of metaphorization, which containment would be proscribed or implied as the classical definitions of metaphor, from Aristotle on. One cannot define metaphor, in the first place, for one would have to depend on undefined specific metaphors—undefined *as* metaphors—a process that cannot be contained. In Hegel, I suggest, the gradient of truth is inscribed as continuing temporality toward the presence-continuum of Absolute Knowledge, along with a gradient toward *the* truth—the truth of consciousness and self-consciousness—that transcends all metaphors. In a general economy, since transformations cannot be fully or uniformly controlled, there could be no law that would

establish a unique gradient. It may not be time only, although time might be important. Nor can it be the excess of temporality annulling time in the name of higher presence or, conversely, the excess annulling time once and for all in the name of the deconstruction of presence and multiplicity of determinations or radical indeterminacy. One must allow for configurations that may, or must, be seen and *presented* as sufficiently determined.

Temporality attributed to Nature is taken uncritically by Hegel, in spite of his understanding of the emergence—*history*—of the concepts of Time and temporality. Hegel's temporality, like his spatiality, remains Newtonian. It is the mathematical continuum of presences, of points of the line, that defines classical temporality and classical spatiality, their mutual complicity and interaction, and their irreducibly mutual definition. It is the continuum based on the concept—if it is in fact a concept—of point and line, of *ousia* and *grammē*. Once Newtonian, it is actually also Aristotelian, as Heidegger points out. Contrary to Heidegger's assessment, however, Hegel, as Derrida argues, is no more, though no less, naive or uncritical than the rest of philosophy—as the metaphysics of presence—and specifically Heidegger. Nothing else, as Derrida suggests, may emerge along these *points* and these lines, along the points and lines. One must conclude, at this *point* and along this *line*, that there is no unique *point* and no absolutely determined *line*. What must be done is to question the category of time in the opposite direction, that of the radical interruption, which is neither absolute continuum nor absolute break. It will be necessary to *interrupt* both as metaphysical concepts and re-configure their efficacy.

“Cosmic” *physical* time cannot thus be reduced, either. No *Geist*, whether mind or spirit—logical, theological or philosophical—no phenomenology, of consciousness or the unconscious, no *Aufhebung* will be able to accomplish this. No continuum—no “time” and no classical excess of time, such as the continuum of Absolute Knowledge—can master this “time”; not even *différance*, which by definition does not master.

In its greatest formality, this immense problem would be formulated thus: is the temporality described by a transcendental phenomenology as “dialectical” as possible, a ground which the structures, let us say the unconscious structures, of temporality would simply modify? Or is the

phenomenological model itself constituted, as a warp of language, logic, evidence, fundamental security, upon a woof that is not its own? And which—such is the most difficult problem—is no longer at all mundane? For it is not by chance that the transcendental phenomenology of the internal time-*consciousness*, so careful to place cosmic time within brackets, must, as consciousness and even as internal consciousness, live a time that is an accomplice of the time of the world. Between consciousness, perception (internal or external), and the “world,” the rupture, even in the subtle form of the reduction, is perhaps not possible. (*Of Grammatology*, 67; *De la grammatologie*, 98)

We might say that Nature’s time, which appears alongside Nature’s Space in the penultimate paragraph of the *Phenomenology*, inscribing “becoming in the form of *free contingent happening*,” is the *cosmic time* to which Derrida refers. That time cannot be made into *Geist*’s time, whether through the sacrifice or otherwise, or, in general, integrated within any form of idealism, that of consciousness or of the unconscious, subjective, transcendental, or still other. Derrida’s main context here is Husserl, who is juxtaposed to Freud. But for Derrida, “this immense problem” is equally indissociable from Hegel. It is posed in his mighty shadow, which, while differently, is of course also the case for Husserl. “The temporality” at issue is that “described by a transcendental phenomenology,” and the one, at its best, “as ‘*dialectical*’ as possible,” which is almost to say, as Hegelian as possible—at its *best*, which, however, is no longer good enough. Nor, conversely, in the shadow of Kant, would any absolute rupture of cosmic time be possible. Such a rupture would either lead to the metaphysical materialism of time and—and perhaps as—matter or, as in Husserl, allow one to bracket cosmic time from a philosophical—*logical*—investigation. Husserl’s claims to that effect are not Hegel’s. Husserl wants less, but still too much, or at once too much and too little. Kant’s shadow, too, spreads mightily over Husserl: two shadows, as the wings of an eagle or of Icarus, who appears at the end of *Speech and Phenomena*: “Rising toward the sun of presence, it is the way of Icarus” (104; *La Voix et le phénomène*, 117).

Before moving to cosmic time—how much greater can the problem and formality be?<sup>47</sup>—Derrida formulates “this immense problem” in Freudian terms in the preceding paragraph, itself, to use Lacan’s term, a

remarkable “short session” on the issues. Derrida’s conclusions are as extraordinary as they are inevitable: “It is the problem of the deferred effect [*Nachträglichkeit*] of which Freud speaks. The temporality to which he refers cannot be that which lends itself to a phenomenology of consciousness or of presence and one may indeed wonder by what right all that is in question here should still be called time, now, anterior present, delay, etc.” (*Of Grammatology*, 67; *De la grammatologie*, 98).

The classical names and concepts are thus not *interruptive* enough. Nor, in the absence of complementarity, are they *continuous* enough, either. Derrida, following Levinas, invokes “an absolute past [un passé absolu]” (*Of Grammatology*, 67; *De la grammatologie*, 108)—the past that has never been and can never be present, the past that can never *appear* by way of a phenomenology of presence. The term “absolute” is perhaps unfortunate. “Radical past?” But that phrase is not without ambiguities, either. Structural, irreducible past? Derrida’s inscription, along with using “past” against “presence,” positions the “absolute past” irreducibly against Hegel. If Hegel’s becoming is, finally, absolute, it is certainly not in the sense of “absolute past”—only *absolute presence*. “The absolute past” is a disruption of every absolute, including its own—a proposition impossible for Hegel, for whom the Absolute as the Absolute *Geist* must be *its own*—absolutely.



## THE WHOLE AND ITS PARTS

Car je ne voy le tout de rien. Ne font pas,  
ceux qui promettent de nous le fair veoir.

—Montaigne

### CHAPTER



“Self”—“one’s own”—is the defining element of the Hegelian Subject—*Geist*. Absolute Knowledge is where this “self-ness”—although “selfish-ness” would not be entirely out of order, either—achieves its full, absolute measure and where it can be possible only in full measure. The self thus determines Hegelian subjectivity as the economy of self-engagement, leading to the general problem of the inhibition and delay of reflection, which this chapter explores in a treatment of Hegelian reflexivity analogous to and interactive with the analysis of the Hegelian continuum offered by the preceding chapter.

The first section considers the economy of delay that, against Hegel’s design, affects the Hegelian system and that enables the general economic system of Derrida’s writing.

The second section offers a similar analysis of the economy of self-containment—of the “its-own-ness” of the “its-own.”

The third section relates reflexivity and, by implication, all knowledge to a multiply inhibited schizophrenic or double-bind economy, in Bateson’s sense, which becomes inevitable once reflexivity becomes refigured general economically. For, as with many other classical concepts, at issue

is not an abandonment, but a reconsideration of the functioning and limits of reflexivity. By the same token, while the double-bind economy leads to a dismantlement or deconstruction of much of Hegel's logic and many of his claims, it also enables one to see how the Hegelian economy achieves its richness and complexity by combining knowledge and history. We still depend on Hegel's schizophrenias, even though we must replace—cure—them by more radical, more schizophrenic schizophrenias of *our own*.

### Delays and Programs

Existing alongside the concept of the subject, the concept of the self has acquired considerable disseminating power during its history since Hegel. Just as the concept of history, it has had a rich and varied life in the shadow of Hegel and other shadows, and shadows of shadows. Certainly, psychoanalysis offers a major extension of the text of philosophy in this respect, nearly depriving philosophy of the term. It has not deprived its own field of the metaphysics of the self—self-sameness or self-presence—which its theorists and practitioners inherited from philosophy and specifically from Hegel. Whenever one speaks of self-knowledge, the shadow of Hegel begins to grow. It may never fully disappear. It is perhaps shortest in Nietzsche when Zarathustra begins—the “moment of the briefest shadow.” It may still be the longest in the last long paragraph of the *Phenomenology*—a shadow the length of History.

This length reflects the immensity of exteriority—the Other that needs to be overcome by *Geist*, the One. This double reflection—into itself and into the other, indeed the absolute other—defines Hegel's logic as the logic of speculative reflection and speculative dialectic, that governs Hegelian reflection and reflexivity and casts a long shadow over the modern and even postmodern history of philosophy, to continue with optical metaphors, which are irreducible whenever reflection and reflexivity are at issue. Hegel thereby also critically juxtaposes the preceding post-Cartesian, and specifically Kantian, philosophy of reflection to his speculative philosophy. The latter should fulfill the necessary Hegelian demand for totality—the wholeness that is in the full presence of all its parts and that masters all inhibitions arising in reflection and reflexive processes. This economy produces the Hegelian solution to the problem of exteriority, posed with a new force and urgency by Kant and addressed

by Fichte and Schelling, to whose systems Hegel responds.<sup>1</sup> Grounding and organizing the economy of the limit in Hegel, and the economy of the ground, the absolute sameness and absolute otherness become, at the limit, conjoined within Hegel's speculative dialectic by means of the mutual necessity or complicity—and unity, but not the complementarity—of reflexivity and continuity.<sup>2</sup>

Derrida's analysis allows us to formulate the problem and enter the economy one needs in order to respond to it in the most effective terms: however effective Hegel's critique of pre-Hegelian reflexivity, from Descartes or from Socrates on, may be, what Hegel fails to realize, or fails to realize fully, is that all *reflection and all reflexivity are supplementarity*, in Derrida's sense. The subject of Hegel's speculative philosophy—*Geist*—cannot escape the logic of the supplement—"the strange structure of the supplement . . . [through which] by delayed reaction, a possibility produces that to which it is said to be added on" (*Speech and Phenomena*, 89; *La Voix et le phénomène*, 99). This—general—economy, however, leads us to a "difference" or "exteriority" that is not even difference or exteriority. While continuously forcing us to engage multiple supplementary and complementary exteriorities and interiorities, or differences and identities, openings and closures, this general economic efficacy may be neither one nor another—neither the One nor the Other—of classical philosophy. It may not even be Heideggerian difference, or Lacanian difference operating in the register of the Real and designated by Lacan as the "*objet petit a*," or even Derrida's *différance*—*différance* with an *a* or with "*objet petit a*."<sup>3</sup> *Différance* extends and radicalizes Heidegger's, Lacan's, and several other economies of differences pertinent here—such as Freud's, Saussure's, Levinas's, or of course Nietzsche's and Bataille's—and marks the (im)possibility at issue within the closure of Hegel and philosophy.

As we have seen, the *Phenomenology*'s last paragraph opens with *History* as "the other side [as opposed to Nature] of [*Geist*'s] Becoming": "*History*, [as] the cognizing, self-mediating process—Spirit externalized into Time [die Geschichte ist das wissende, sich vermittelnde Werden—der an die Zeit entäußerte Geist]" (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590; translation modified). "But," Hegel also says, "this externalization, is equally an externalization of itself [ihrer selbst]; the negative is the negative of *itself* [das Negative ist das negative seiner selbst]" (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590; translation modified, emphasis added). For "the

self-knowing Spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limit [Das Wissen kennt nicht nur sich, sondern auch das Negative seiner *selbst* oder seiner Grenze]" (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:590). This absolute excess figures the absolute limit of *self-knowledge*. This limit is accessible only to Absolute Knowledge by way of the unique transgression—the Hegelian sacrifice [*Aufopferung*].

The limit of knowledge is defined by one's knowledge of and *beyond* the limit of one's knowledge. While other limit configurations are conceivable, Hegel's topology of *Geist* implies that once this limit [*Grenze*] is known to *Geist*, there can no longer be any limit to *Geist*'s knowledge. Hegel's *Grenze* would be better translated as border line or limit line. This topology follows from the economy of the continuum as a full and fully conscious and everywhere infinite presence. Totality is infinity, to paraphrase Levinas's title, and infinite continuity—at any given point and as a whole, the fullness of extensive and intensive continuum.<sup>4</sup> Any *experience* of the limit, or of the borderline would establish a break, a limit, or an interruption of actual and potential knowledge and consciousness. It implies the unconscious, as Lacan intimated via and in the shadow of Hegel.<sup>5</sup>

Such relationships between the known and the unknown constantly occur in human thinking or history, however continuous the process of thinking may seem at any given moment. They are beautifully rendered in Bataille's elaborations in *Guilty* on the incompleteness of knowledge, in this case, human knowledge. Bataille configures them in a very different economy—a general economy—and topology of knowledge and sacrifice. Absolute Knowledge, by contrast, must enact a kind of continuous sacrifice. For the human mind, such an experience can only constitute a break, indeed an absolute break—death—and can be *seen* only as a break.

This economy, thus, entails two different perspectives: the human mind experiences and theoretically "sees" a ruptured configuration, but *Geist* as Absolute Knowledge experiences the full continuum—the full and fully conscious becoming-presence. The human mind cannot really experience the infinite rupture of absolute—infinite—otherness; it cannot, unlike *Geist*, experience its own death. The experience of one's own death becomes the experience of full one's-own-ness—and the necessary condition of the possibility of full reflexivity. To be a sufficient condition, it

must in addition be self-conscious; in short, precisely a sacrifice as defined by Hegel. Hegel's logic is in fact quite impeccable here; and the conception is extraordinary—absolute continuity *is* absolute rupture. Absolute Knowledge, thus, possesses the tremendous—absolute—power of overcoming the negative. Human thinking, even at its best, can only approximate this process; and it must do so in order to achieve the height and deserve the name of dialectical thinking and to maintain its economy—experiential, philosophical, or political.

The Hegelian sacrifice—the knowledge's knowledge of its own limits and the self's knowledge of its absolute negative or its absolute other—is thus the limit of the Hegelian economy. This economy thus poses and exemplifies, perhaps to the limit, the general problem of the inhibition and delay of reflection. The problem would relate to all reflexive—self-conscious, self-directed, or self-enclosed—processes and to any formation, individual or collective, that keeps for whatever purpose a record of its own development. At issue may be an individual memory, a history of one kind or another, or a combination of both. The records themselves may concern different aspects of a given system's functioning—"facts," "strategies," or "methods"—necessary and available for a system's survival or success. Such a functioning may also define an ideology or a set of ideologies of history; or it may be defined by them, for these relationships are reciprocal. They shape, interactively, a view or theory of the historical process, the compilation of historical records and the practice of historical studies and historico-political practice. These relationships define what may be seen as the historical consciousness and self-consciousness of a given system.

Would such a concern of a system's concern with itself, as part of a system's consciousness or unconscious, characterize any system, process, or textual field? This question can only be a question of the *degree* to which such a concern with itself might determine a given system or class of systems. For, against Hegel, no single concern can ever fully determine the existence, functioning, survival, or success of any system, which is to say that there is no system without an unconscious and finally without the general economic excess of its self-representation.

If one wishes to see this problem in terms of *system*, one cannot avoid the preeminence of Hegel, either. "Hegel" would be the greatest name of the problem of system in the history of this approach to "the nature of

things," even if one has in mind such comparatively recent developments as cybernetics, general systems theory, computer theories, or computer technologies, as against earlier Hegelian or post-Hegelian applications of the concept of system.<sup>6</sup> Hegel, as will be discussed further, speaks of machines, "computers," too, which he would oppose to philosophical thinking as system, even though but not without unperceived ironies. *Geist* or later the Idea is thus also the name of the idea and the problem of system. Hegel's later works, in general, combine system and history even more decisively or more overtly than the *Phenomenology*. But the title "Earliest System-Programme of German Idealism" was given to the text that has a central significance in early Hegel, even though it appears not to have been written by Hegel.<sup>7</sup> Much of Hegel's own text, however, is about systems and programmes—and programs—about the systemic and systematic operations that Derrida relates to *writing*. The *Phenomenology*, we recall, was announced as the first part of the "System of Science." Hegel built many systems and *willed* still more; and this will to system, as Nietzsche grasped, might be much more to the point.<sup>8</sup> One cannot build *the* system, a system that would be fully—*absolutely*—systematic, although one cannot make do without systems, either.

All Hegel's conceptions of difference, transformation, and exteriority are shaped by this problematics. The most crucial one is the difference between the System—*Geist*—and its idea or concept of itself—the Notion—the ultimate level of difference addressed by Hegel's speculative dialectic. The Notion is a kind of record, too, but as "the revelation of the depth of Spirit" (*Phenomenology*, 492; *Werke* 3:591), it is far more than simply a record; and as we have seen, has a rich and complex structure and economy. As Derrida shows, there is never such a thing as *simply* a record, although, under certain conditions, there must be the effects of simply recording. In question is what one records and how one can or must do so, whether in memory or history, and thus the conceptual and institutional formations that make records possible and that sustain and control them.

The mastery of this difference between the system and its record of itself is finally consummated in the *Phenomenology*'s final paragraph, as the condition of the possibility of "the absolute Notion" [der absolute Begriff]. The latter thereby also encompasses *Geist*; in this sense, the Notion is, or becomes in the course of History, as productive of *Geist* as it

is a product of it. This relationship becomes even more pronounced in the dialectic of the Idea—as system and history, system-history and history-system—in later works. The economy itself, however, is in place already in the *Phenomenology*; and *Geist* and the Notion can fully merge and be identified absolutely only when both become absolute, which takes place in the final paragraph of the *Phenomenology* as the condition of Absolute Knowledge.

As Derrida's analysis demonstrates, however, the very difference between the system and the system's conception or record of itself is conversely always a result or effect of a certain, in this sense a more "primary," inhibition and delay or deferral of reflection—the *différance* and supplementarity, and thereby complementarity, of reflection. The latter would in fact necessitate a complementarity of great theoretical, historical, and political importance—the complementarity of system and its record of itself—that will translate and transform the Hegelian Unity of *Geist* and the Notion.

This complementarity could also be seen as a part of a more general complementarity between system and text, leading to *writing* in Derrida's sense. For example, one might *reflect*, as Hegel himself did many times, that there is a role to be played and an inhibition and delay to be effected by any philosophy and by any given philosopher, such as Hegel, in the *production* of "the idea" of *Geist* and of *Geist*'s idea of itself. In the Preface, Hegel predictably claims the opposite. According to Hegel, what he says is the product of *Geist*'s self-reflection and of the history of philosophy, and this process is his subject. *Geist*, the product of his critique of all prior philosophy of reflection and specifically Kant, is also his account of this history, this mediation, as he announces the irreducible delay that always leaves behind *Geist* any individual or any collective formation, however philosophical or world-historical. One can only follow what *Geist* has already left behind (*Phenomenology*, 16; *Werke* 3:32).

What Hegel should have said is that some individuals or endeavors, such as given fields of theory or practice, are ahead of others. One could even say that this is what Hegel "really" says. No, not really. Nietzsche does say so, with Hegel as one of his examples, but not Hegel. Or rather, Hegel does say something of that kind as well, but, in contrast to Nietzsche, only to the extent that no one—neither an individual nor any

collective human enterprise—can be ahead of *Geist*. It is the proximity to *Geist* that enables some to be ahead of others. This claim does reaffirm Hegel's concern with and strong interest in the future, things new, "unattempted yet," even though all human future can only be, always already, a past for *Geist*. The future of *Geist*, Absolute Knowledge, is Hegel's overriding concern, too; and *Geist* is determined by its movement toward the future, ahead of human history and leading it forward, which is in effect the grounding economy of all ideologies, theoretical or political.

Hegel's economy of history is thus structured by the irreducible delay of human knowledge as against the history of *Geist*—*Geist* as History. But for both *Geist*-History and human knowledge and history, Hegel's is the economy of the enhancement of consciousness and self-consciousness, and the forms of knowledge they imply. All such processes depend on delay-deferral of one kind or another, which dependence can, even from "within" Hegel's own text, be reread—or *rewritten*—against Hegel as the irreducible unconscious—general economic—delay.

The dynamics of transformations in Hegel are *never only* a revelation of what is already there *from the very beginning*, of the already present but not yet known. While Hegel's is always a restricted economy of controlled transformations, it is not only a progress in revelation of the same as already present somewhere and free of difference and becoming. The revelation or making conscious of what is already present, if hidden, elsewhere and the form of the metaphysics of presence it entails do have their role in the Hegelian economy. The latter process obviously governs the irreducible delay of all human knowledge and relation to *Geist*, as well as various processes and relations at the level of *Geist* itself, such as the increase in self-consciousness from Religion to Science, with which Hegel opens the final chapter of the *Phenomenology*. A certain knowledge, specifically of what *Geist* is, is already "there," but Religion, as opposed to Science, is not yet aware of it: this knowledge is not a part of the consciousness of *Geist* as Religion. Making it consciously known, making it a part of the self-consciousness, happens by way of Science. This process is the way of Science and to Science, and the way to Science is already Science, which is the main argument of the Introduction to the *Phenomenology* (56; *Werke* 3:80).

Thus, the incorporation into consciousness of that which is already there functions in Hegel under certain conditions and at certain mo-



ments, and always within a very complex economy or play of forces and textual movements, as in the Introduction.<sup>9</sup> It functions, that is, *locally* without fully containing the Hegelian economy of knowledge. *Locally*, however, it must function in any general economy as well. Hegelian knowledge is fundamentally, structurally historical, but it is not only acquired, it also has to be *produced*. There is *new* knowledge, the knowledge that *was not there*. *Geist* generates this new knowledge all the time, even though it always remains a controlled and *continuous* production—the continuum of new knowledge and new history.

In several other texts and specifically in the Introduction to *The Philosophy of History*, Hegel, it is true, may appear to suggest a different model when he maintains the self-identity of *Geist* or when he speaks of the work of *Geist*'s self-consciousness as realizing its potentiality, particularly using the standard biological metaphors: "as the germ bears in itself the whole nature of the tree, and the taste and the form of its fruit, so do the first traces of *Geist* virtually contain the whole of that History [wie der Keim die ganze Natur des Baumes, den Geschmack, die Form der Früchte in sich trägt, so enthalten auch schon die ersten Spuren des *Geistes* virtualiter die ganze Geschichte]" (17–18; *Werke* 12:31). Hegel refers to the same economy, in a somewhat more complex fashion, toward the end of the Introduction (78, *Werke* 12:105).

These are classical conceptions and metaphors. But they are not altogether stable, and we are far from being finished with their implications, although a great many possibilities have been played out throughout the history, pre- and post-Hegelian, of philosophy, literature, criticism, or psychoanalysis and other fields, including biology. For the moment, the actualization in "the tree" of "the potential" of "the germ" as a metaphoric form of metaphysics of presence does *necessarily* signal the *control* of transformations. But it does *not* necessarily signal that "the tree" is already fully in "the germ," particularly since Hegel says only that what "the germ bears in itself" is "the whole *nature* of the tree," not the tree itself, and uses other qualifiers such as "traces" or "virtually." The metaphor and the model would need to be greatly qualified even as biology, let alone history; and the degree of control of transformations and the specific economy by which this control can be accomplished are part of the issue.<sup>10</sup> Still, Hegel does at certain points imply more strongly a case of realization in consciousness of the un-conscious content as already there,

present. It is not impossible, however, to read Hegel's propositions at issue as maintaining identity *in* transformations.

The History of the Notion as the history of *knowledge*—the conceptual or conceptually comprehended history [begriffene Geschichte] of *Geist*'s self-knowledge leading to Absolute Knowledge—can thus be read as, at least in the *Phenomenology*, conforming to a *transforming* economy of conceptual production. Both the *Logic* and the *Encyclopedia* seem to suggest similar economies as well, in part via the economy—and utopia—of the continuum as considered earlier. *New* knowledge is produced, knowledge that was not there earlier even in Absolute Knowledge, which has no unconscious or pre-conscious in this sense. The economy that emerges, as a result, and realizes itself fully in the result—in Absolute Knowledge—is the continuum of self-knowledge that, along with recovering knowledge from the unconscious, also *creates new* knowledge.

To a degree, this history may even be opposed to World History as it is presented in the lectures; and World History as actual human history [die wirkliche Geschichte] is, we recall, always already delayed—deferred—in relation to *Geist*. Hegel's painstaking elaborations on different types of historical understanding and inquiry—original [ursprünglich], reflective [reflektierend], and philosophical [philosophisch] history—in *The Philosophy of History* are in part conditioned and necessitated by this difference, as Hegel's progression of different forms of historical understanding brings one closer to *Geist*. Actual history *cannot* create in full measure. It can only follow and imitate *Geist* in accord with the suitably historicized Platonic or Socratic scheme. It can only discover and become conscious of what, according to Hegel, "Spirit [*Geist*] already left behind."

While we must respect the complexity and rigor of Hegel's conceptions and elaborations concerning any specific claim and concept such as wholeness, *Geist* as Absolute Knowledge is always the whole, the whole that is in the full historical presence—presence-becoming—of all its parts. Under the Hegelian conditions of speculative philosophy, this wholeness would have to be maintained by any reading of Hegel. One cannot of course prevent or forbid claims to the contrary; but they would be difficult to sustain. I would argue, however, that in Hegel's case one cannot speak unequivocally and without qualification of the sum of all knowledge as already there, gradually available to revelation. Whatever the significance of this model in the history of philosophy and intellectual

history in general, the historicity of knowledge in Hegel cannot be reduced to it.

Maintaining the continuous production of *new* knowledge makes the Hegelian economy, while still restricted, more historical and transformational. While always already *Geist*, *Geist* itself is never the same. It is only the same as the Hegelian difference. The latter difference, it should be reiterated, is *not* a general economic difference such as *différance*, however much the economy of *différance* opens up the possibilities, and some necessities, of rethinking and revisions of Hegel, which have been explored in the wake of Derrida and deconstruction and, to a degree, following Heidegger, Bataille, and Blanchot. "The same [le même] [as] . . . *différance* (with an *a*)" (*Margins*, 17; *Marges*, 19), while it also inhabits and comprehends all sameness, does so differently from Hegel, or Heidegger, in particular by radically, although rigorously, suspending the—restricted—economy of the ground, defining the unity of identity and difference in Hegel, along with the economy of the unity itself. As a result, such a *différance* in turn inhabits, and inhibits, Hegelian and Heideggerian difference, and a corresponding general economy pre-comprehends both Hegelian and Heideggerian restricted systems.

Hegel's conception, or of course general economic differential play such as *différance*, need not imply that new knowledge is produced from nowhere, created out of nothing. Creation *ex nihilo*, for any reader of Hegel, beginning with Hegel himself, poses an immense conceptual and textual complexity of all beginnings, ends, or transitions, Hegel's or in general. Rather, mind, on this occasion *either Geist or* human mind, builds it up, for example, by way of structural complexity, enrichment, or organization—*information*. To be sure, one needs *resources*, the resources of energy, to do so. One needs, for example, and in particular, the resources of the body and of the unconscious which Hegel does not take into account, except at times against himself by way of his textual unconscious, in a general economy of his text. But Hegel does take many things and many resources into account, and we still see some of these resources along Hegelian lines. Conversely, one is often greatly helped in grasping Hegel's conceptions by way of modern ones, such as a production of new knowledge by increasing the structural and relational complexity of existing systems. Absolute Knowledge is not a knowledge that already knows everything but rather a knowledge that *knows* everything that it *knows*.

The latter proposition is no empty tautology in Hegel. It defines the absolute reduction of the unconscious. The task of history is bringing about this continuity of knowledge from “the moments of the reconciliation of *Geist* with its own consciousness”—the moments that as moments are “*single and separate*”—finally achieving the absolute continuum (*Phenomenology*, 482; *Werke* 3:578).

The differences and nuances of the micro-economics of transformations are of tremendous importance in locating the difference between different economies of transformations, whether restricted or general. *From the critical perspective*, at issue are the claims of destruction of metaphysics in the name of transformations, becoming, or history while insisting on their control by the highest law, hidden or open. *From a positive perspective*, one may need such difference as a better starting point for moving toward more radical transformational economies.

*Geist*'s advance controls transformations and determines the historicity of history in Hegel. Any theoretical economy of that type poses crucial questions as to where and how advance records of its accomplishments must be maintained and what is the nature and structure or the hardware of this great program—the great self-generating software at once indissociable from human collectivity and exceeding any given human collectivity. This software is obviously a part of the general configuration and *problem* of idealism and, as indicated earlier, of philosophy in general.

In one disguise or another, this problem also often reemerges in many materialisms, especially in Marxism, given that the problem is inherent in any “*Geist*.” In Hegel this advanced and excessive software, all *Geist*'s software—Knowledge and Absolute Knowledge—is the hardware as well. It carries itself on; it is carried on by itself, as it reduces all exteriority in general and matter as *hardware* in particular. It reduces them to and integrates them into the Ideal by making them *Geist*'s *exteriorization* in order, in the same gesture, to be *interiorized*. Against Hegel, however, and many a materialism, one can define matter as a *hardware* on which no mind and no *Geist* can rely absolutely, even if one is in possession of the best software—language, ideas, logic, or programs—formal or transcendental.

For Hegel, the “program” cannot be conceived as software, either, that is, as anything fully formal or formalized, mathematical, or *programmable*. *Geist*'s is a transcendental software, which would not make the

Hegelian conception any less problematic, at least according to our software *and* hardware, which are neither formal nor transcendental. No such system, however effective, can function by itself. It always depends on a nonformalizable system of one kind or another, even in mathematics, as Gödel's theorem would imply. Such a (non)system is in fact far more radically nonformalizable than all transcendental systems hitherto. By the same token, however, no system can be absolutely nonformalizable, either.

The first section of Derrida's *Of Grammatology* is entitled "The Program," drawing on the thematics of cybernetics and computer sciences and technologies. The question of writing as posed by Derrida is, by definition, the question of memory as records that a system must generate and maintain in every sense conceivable: collect, store, keep in order, organize, and reorganize.

The relation to *writing* is therefore fundamental, *structural*. As Derrida shows, all recordkeeping, all the bookkeeping of philosophy, which wants to contain everything in its books, must be always already *writing*. Philosophy has always wanted to do without *writing* and has condemned it; but it has always depended and has had to depend on it. The record of itself that any system keeps, Hegelian or other, must be always already a *written* record—by virtue of a delayed *différance* of a system from itself. *Writing*, in this sense, inhibits all metaphysics of presence, which thus becomes re-written as a repression of one or another kind of writing on which it depends and which it condemns. *Writing* makes presence possible, but it also undermines the role and significance that philosophy assigns to presence. Once there is memory, once there is recordkeeping, *writing* becomes inevitable; and there is always, everywhere, recordkeeping of one type or another.

By the same token, one needs a different economy of writing as opposed to what philosophy—though not only philosophy—sees as writing. This economy and the ensemble of complementarities and complementarities of complementarities generated thereby may no longer be contained under the name "writing" or any unique or single name, single conceptual chain, or single text. It can no longer be contained in a book. Different types of recording can never be mastered by or integrated into any one system of writing, or one system, or one nonsystem, of anything.

Among many other implications of this general economy is that all

recordkeeping becomes fundamentally political, and it is as such that it might as yet prove to be the *most* complex, demanding the most complex complementarities. The analysis of the political might prove to be—and in truth has been—the most powerful weapon against Hegel's *Geist* or the Idea, which is also always a political system, but with a different ideology. *The irreducible complexity of the heterogeneous* could very well be the best characterization of *the political*—a “definition” even, if one could dream of defining the political. Any recordkeeping is an enormous instrument of power, which is always *political*, and all records—any memory—will always prove to be, necessarily, exterior, social, political. Hence, “writing cannot be thought outside the horizon of intersubjective violence,” a kind of “political *différance*” (*Of Grammatology*, 127, 130; *De la grammatologie*, 185, 190), and thus outside its political dimensions, from the politics of specific fields and institutions such as universities to geopolitics.

Hegelian efficacy thus must be, if not reversed, then re-comprehended by a richer and more complex economy. It may often need to be reversed, too; but the economy demanded must be *more*, not less, than a reversal of Hegel. “More primary” inhibition and delay become irreducible, necessitating, together with the complementarity of all inscriptions, an inscription of a more complex and more “unconscious” efficacy and an *excess* of all the processes and conceptions—difference, exteriority, delay, or inhibition—thus engaged. A system can never fully master and possess its records—including its records of itself. General economy is irreducible within any system, and it leads to the exteriority that exceeds all such records and the system itself.

For Hegel, conversely, it is *Geist* that is the efficacy, configured by way of the contradictions and syntheses of dialectic and *Aufhebung*, such as that of History and (Self)-Consciousness, as opposed to complementarity and above all the unconscious. In Absolute Knowledge this efficacy appears in its *pure* form and pure relation to its pure effects, finally disposing of all undesirable effects. As Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida show, however, the problem will be that the efficacy of all the effects at issue, *including* those that Hegel *wants* to retain, cannot be what Hegel—or indeed all philosophy hitherto—wants it to be. The undesirable, improper effects more often produce than contaminate the pure. There is no text in Hegel, philosophy, or, so it seems, anywhere *thus far* that would

prove otherwise. This is one of the reasons why Hegel has enormous difficulties in inscribing the difference—the self-difference-self-identity—of *Geist*, Absolute Knowledge, the Idea. All that *appears*, also phenomenologically, as causality or efficacy and as *pure* efficacy will have to be reinscribed as effects of a general economic non-causal efficacy. Classical efficacies and causes will often become the effects of what they repress, but other efficacious networks and forms of efficacy will be involved, as well.

This process cannot be contained by the economy of repression. In the end, nothing can emerge either as pure effects or efficacies, but only provisional ones; and there will always remain a possibility of reversal or reinscription. The very indeterminacy inherent in this configuration—that we cannot know in advance what may be so refigured, when or how—is part of the general economic efficacy at issue. In whatever guise or disguise theoretical structures appear, whether as efficacies, effects, or something else, and whether in phenomenology—Hegelian, Husserlian, or other—they can always appear and re-appear differently. It can always be demonstrated that claims of that type are impossible to sustain rigorously, or so it appears *for now*. They can always be deconstructed, while their limits *can be* rigorously refigured, making them always *conditional* claims within these refigured limits.

Above all, the efficacy at issue *cannot* be seen as conscious, although for strategic and historical reasons, often enough it could be called historical. For the same reasons, it resists the name “conscious”—more often so, it appears, than the name “historical.” Very complex economies and complementarities of choice and necessity determine these complementarities—history and the unconscious as against history and consciousness; at a certain point, however, the complexity of their efficacy becomes irreducible. By the same token, however, it cannot be unconditionally called unconscious, or historical, either. The name “unconscious” does, however, appear to have considerable strategic force, including in conjunction with history; thus, it can transform, by way of a complementary matrix, the name “historical,” together with the very economies of efficacy of both historicity and unconsciousness, into general economies. It is not that consciousness or knowledge—or self-consciousness and reflection—disappear or that one need no longer bother with them. Quite the contrary: they become more complex and important than ever, since

they are necessarily engaged by the complementary matrices that so emerge. But they are no longer always or unconditionally more important than other things, such as the unconscious, that philosophy places in or outside its margins. A general economy must reconfigure consciousness, knowledge, history and other things *proper* to philosophy, and particularly reflexive or self-directed processes and systems, individual or collective.

Thus, no system—and specifically no system of consciousness or self-consciousness, as in Hegel—can *consciously* master its own *unconscious*, as the expression “its own” becomes problematic and, strictly speaking, impossible. If such a system were possible, it would perhaps have to be the impossible Absolute Knowledge. The materialist dialectic, specifically dialectical materialism, may in this sense be even less possible than the idealist dialectic. Marx’s political economy is a *conscious* and *dialectical*, albeit materialist, system of governing historical transformations. Matter, however, *resists* dialectic. Delay and inhibition cannot be reduced, either through an idealist or a materialist restricted economy of reduction. There always remains an irreducible remainder of exteriority—radical alterity, which, like all (non)concepts in the general economy, as *radical*, may not be absolute. Absolute alterity would not be radical enough.

According to Derrida, there can be no text, no “*writing* machine,” and specifically not Hegel’s (“Tympan,” *Margins*, xi; “The Pit and the Pyramid,” *Margins*, 107–8), that could survive without engaging the radical difference—*différance* and *writing* in Derrida’s sense—however unperceived the latter might remain by the “consciousness” of such a text or machine. Once there is difference or exteriority, there always *is*—there “is” and “is” “not”—*différance*. Such a *différance* always emerges in one place or another in the text of philosophy, even, and precisely at the moment, when one tries to repress it or explain its effects away *logically*, as Parmenides was perhaps the first to do. The *différance* can never be fully mastered by philosophy even if it is the philosophy of difference and becoming. There is no procedure that can do so in the text of philosophy, or that can attribute such mastery to the *absolute* other of the text of philosophy, to some nonphilosophy or antiphilosophy. As we have seen, this *différance* may not even be conceived of as *delay* or any other model of temporality or becoming available so far and insofar as it can be inscribed or articulated by a text, philosophical or other. By the same



token, *the unconscious* would in turn always have to be inhibited by something else—at times by a consciousness of various kinds.

A certain unconscious, the unconscious *as* inhibition, *inhibits* all consciousness and all knowledge. Hegel knew that—to a degree. One cannot, however, attribute to Hegel simply a repression of this knowledge. This knowledge, the knowledge that is available to us, now, by means of a certain un-knowledge, could not have been fully available to Hegel to repress it. It should also be noted here, that while there is *philosophical* specificity in this respect, this undesirability and this impropriety are often such for reasons that are not particularly philosophical. For all its unconventionality, even idiosyncrasy, philosophy tends to conform to many conventional rules of what is proper in a “good,” *proper*, society. Inhibitions, particularly *improper* inhibitions, and much else—within or beyond its margins—that philosophy wants to disregard possess a far more powerful efficacy than philosophy could perceive or would want to acknowledge. Much if not everything that is possible for the Hegelian *Geist* to *achieve* in its development is in fact *conditioned* by the unconscious, rather than *simply* inhibited or contaminated so that one can remove the undesirable contamination and purify the spirit of philosophical investigation.

The unconscious, thus, contaminates and inhibits irreducibly, and itself demands a general economy and complementarity—the complementarity with consciousness and other complementarities over which it has no control. The unconscious cannot, therefore, be seen as the uninhibited and uncontaminated process or an absolutely primary efficacy. In showing how primary—more or less unconscious—and secondary—more or less conscious—processes mutually inhibit each other in Freud’s matrix, Samuel Weber writes: “This ‘primacy’ of inhibition is even more the inhibition of the Primary.”<sup>11</sup> This radical—general economic—inhibition also inhibits the unconscious and thus inhibition itself: in a general economy, there cannot be an uninhibited inhibition. But this inhibition also generates powerful complementarities enabling effective historical and theoretical analysis. Along with other things that philosophy does not want to deal with—although, and perhaps because, it might secretly dream about them—the unconscious, or again general economic inhibition, puts into play things that Hegel and philosophy never dreamed of.

## Being on One's Own

Hegel's answer—*Geist* and Absolute Knowledge, or later the Idea—to the problem of the unconscious, exteriority, and inhibition, finally, collapses even within the limits of a restricted economy.<sup>12</sup> The problem, more than Hegel's answer, is the very question—"Can a system master *its own* unconscious?"—and it pertains to many other configurations—artistic, theoretical or political. In some of these, Hegel as a whole—Hegel seen as a whole—is deemed to collapse quickly and easily while reaffirming and extending Hegel, if these "collapses" rise to Hegel's own level, which is a far from common occurrence. In Bataille's and Derrida's *general* economies, this collapse is hardly quick; and it cannot perhaps be called collapse there, compared to Nietzsche. With Nietzsche one can speak of the collapse of Hegelianism and much else, even a quick collapse.

In a general economy any system must have *an unconscious*. Which ever system is at issue, its operations are always inhibited and its exterior cannot be reduced, demanding therefore an analysis and description in terms of complementarity. The system or systems that Hegel wants to account for are no exceptions. Notwithstanding all other factors responsible for what happens in Hegel's text, Hegel, let me reiterate, does want to *account* for history—its unity, its direction, and its consciousness; and history always has unities, linearities, and consciousness. They are at times just as irreducible as heterogeneities, nonlinearities, and the unconscious for which Hegel tries to account as well by subjugating them to unity, linearity, and consciousness. There always is, then, an unconscious of one kind or another, thus problematizing "the unconscious" and "is," indeed, problematizing them more radically than all philosophy could hitherto. The unconscious, as opposed to "is" and the question of *Being*, has been far more often uncritically dismissed than critically problematized by philosophy. That assessment would not be contradicted by the important qualification that it is not impossible, and is at times necessary, to borrow from the philosophical critique of the unconscious. The heterogeneity of the unconscious is in turn irreducible. There is always, by definition, more than one unconscious, and more than the unconscious, however conceived. This excess leads to more directly oppositional complementarities such as consciousness and the unconscious, or more com-

plex double or multiple junctures, such as history, materiality, and the unconscious. Nothing can have “*its own*” unconscious, however. The unconscious, by definition, cannot be owned, in particular it cannot be owned by itself.

The very expression “*its own* unconscious” cannot be used rigorously under these conditions. The unconscious in general economy is a radical and irreducible undermining of all its-own-ness. The whole question of the unconscious, exteriority, difference, or transformation and history, posed in a general economy, turns on the (im)possibility of the its-own-ness of its own, and the radical deconstruction of all self-reflexivity and self-consciousness. As Derrida writes in “The Double Session”: “[The Mallarméan figure of] the fold is not a form of reflexivity. If by reflexivity one means the movement of consciousness or self-presence that plays such a determining role in Hegel’s speculative logic and dialectic, in the movement of sublation (*Aufhebung*) and negativity (the essence is reflection, says the greater *Logic*), then reflexivity is but an effect of the fold as text” (*Dissemination*, 270; *La Dissémination*, 302; translation modified).

In this sense, Nietzsche’s lifelong attack on “Know thyself!” acquires profound theoretical grounds and enormous implications. Nietzsche had much contempt for “the profound,” too, rather preferring “surfaces”; but one should not be too greatly deceived in this respect: Nietzsche’s surfaces are more “profound” than the depths of philosophy, even to being abyssal. In the wake of Nietzsche, and Heidegger’s and Derrida’s analysis, especially Derrida’s analysis of Heidegger—and of Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche—the question of “the its-own-ness of its-own” may also be posed as the question of property in its broadest sense, from the phenomenology of the individual subject to the political economy. The proposition *being on one’s own* inscribes the *essence* of philosophical *thinking* and its history—by the very phrase: *Being, on*—which the Greek of *ontology*, the logic, or logos, of Being—the *One* of Parmenides—*own*—self-contained, self-present, self [selbst]. From the project of ontology in *Being and Time* on, this history enables Heidegger to attribute to all these words and concepts *essence* and authenticity and to claim an authentic property and propriety of thinking, defined as thinking or, in later works, thinking-poetizing on the truth of Being.

We are far from having exhausted the theoretical and indeed the political implications of what is at stake and what is put into play by this

undermining of self-consciousness. It disrupts much more than Hegel or the dialectic of consciousness in general, either idealist or materialist. It would disrupt much of Freud's economy of the unconscious as well. "We"—Who are we?—can never have a fully complete idea, however historical it may be, of "who we are." There can be no absolute anthropology in this sense, and anthropology as science also is a part of Hegel's grand design in the *Encyclopedia*. We may never be able *properly* to position ourselves in relation to history, not *even in principle*. We can never in full measure own ourselves, whether in the psychological sense or the historical, or historico-political, sense. We can never fully own our property or what we like to see as our property and "our own." Property is theft in the sense that one never, in truth, has full or fully lawful possession of it; it is the very concept of *proper* possession or ownership, or law, that demands a critical scrutiny, as Derrida's general—and general-economic—analysis of the metaphysics of the proper as the metaphysics of presence taught us.

The question of theft and property is actually used, quite *properly*, as an example, in Hegel's analysis of the Ground as the unity of identity and difference in the second *Logic*, the *Logic* of the *Encyclopedia* (Hegel's *Logic*, 77; *Werke* 8:250). This "example" would require the examination of the very concept of exemplarity, in the text of philosophy and in general, which exceeds what Hegel's logic can offer although it still offers much, and again particularly his extraordinary analysis of the Ground.<sup>13</sup> Hegel profoundly understood that the law of the ground is the ground of the law, but we need a very different, general economy of both ground and law, or of property and theft.

That does not mean that "property" or "ownership" in its many functions—theoretical or political, or legal—is not possible, necessary or *legitimate*, in either the broad or the narrow sense of the last term. Nor does it mean that one can never be in command of one's own intellectual powers, that one cannot "come into one's own," or that one cannot develop a considerable or even tremendous degree of consciousness. One often, although not always, displays a broader degree of self-knowledge or self-consciousness when one "knows" that one can never be fully self-conscious or fully know oneself or who "we" are. One often needs "knowledge" of this, at times enormous, loss in knowledge and self-knowledge, even and perhaps particularly in the most conscious and most

responsible action. But, as Derrida's analysis exhaustively shows, against Hegel and the long history to which Hegel belongs, *properly*, and which culminates in Heidegger, there can be no property, or propriety, presence, proximity to *Geist*, Being, or any other form of philosophical or political capital that would *insure* against an "invasion" and "theft" of the unconscious.

Nor, equally importantly, would this radical critique of self-consciousness diminish various reflexive and historical and theoretical concerns. If anything, such concerns must be enhanced, as has been demonstrated by recent developments in poststructuralist criticism and theory, and specifically deconstruction, and analogous approaches in other fields, such as history, and in particular in recent—after Kuhn and Feyerabend—investigations in the history and sociology of science, in the works of such authors as Barry Barnes, David Bloor, Harry M. Collins, Bruno Latour, Andrew Pickering, Steve Woolgar, and several others.<sup>14</sup> The investigation of historical and, thus, as Hegel profoundly understood, to a degree always self-reflexive conditions of knowledge is a crucial general economic concern. Often—but, as always, not always—we must reflect upon and understand the psychological, social, historical, and political condition of the production of knowledge, specifically theoretical or scientific knowledge, but symmetrically or interactively—complementarily—also historical and the other types of knowledge just listed.

Under the conditions of general economy such a list cannot in fact be closed and all these denominations and the boundaries between all of them—and not only between them and "knowledge," "theory," or "science"—cannot be fully or unconditionally delimited. There exists, therefore, a higher-level and more multiple symmetry—or rather interpenetration and complementarity—of different fields and features that makes all unconditional, once and for all, demarcations impossible, but also produces various effects of demarcations, separation, or definition of fields, projects, or concepts. It is only by virtue of this dynamics, unperceived by them, that classical or restricted-economic systems can claim either unconditional separation or conversely unconditional unification or organization of knowledge and different fields and modes of knowledge.

Against Hegel and his many shadows, we can never fully determine—either fully globalize or, by inversion, fully localize—the reflexive configu-

rations so emerging. One can never achieve a full reflection of either global or local conditions of one's analysis or the (self-)analysis of one's own analysis;<sup>15</sup> or spell out, including in Derrida's sense of *writing*, all symmetries or asymmetries between different fields, areas, and modes of inquiry as just indicated. A *différance*, always emerging thereby, is irreducible, prohibiting all absolute consciousness and self-consciousness and reflection, or once again any absolute unconscious. Thus, against Hegel, it prohibits the possibility of total—or conversely absolutely local—economies, either as accessible or inaccessible. For example, as Derrida demonstrates in "Signature Event Context" and "Limited Inc a b c . . ." (in *Limited Inc*), we can never fully determine such configurations or by definitively and, particularly, consciously *contextualizing* them; or self-consciously, fully determine the context of our own analysis. Historically speaking the claim of the determination by contextualization, and particularly conscious determination by means of context has been in recent history, and remains, one of the most powerful forces of metaphysics, using this term once again in its broad sense of restricted economy.<sup>16</sup> Without the general economy of context—which denomination and determination, too, cannot and need not be simply abandoned—one never quite departs from Hegel. For Hegel, once again, profoundly grasps the necessity to reflect on all our determinations, although not quite the radical implications of this necessity. Under the same conditions, however, this, or indeed any, necessity in turn cannot be absolute. It cannot be always absolutely necessary, any more than choice—or chance—can be unconditionally possible.

Hegel, as we have seen, neither claims nor believes in the possibility of full, absolute self-consciousness for *human* consciousness, individual or collective. The Notion is *owned* by *Geist alone*, even though *Geist* is never alone—thanks to participating humanity. Hegel does make a claim, however, that full self-consciousness—Absolute Knowledge—is possible and indeed necessary for *Geist*. The claim—the claim in principle—is crucial, however this possibility and necessity are conceived, although the "how" and the specificity of Hegelian or any such economy cannot be suspended. The *principle* itself, however, leads to claims for and of sciences and ideologies in many domains. Such claims abound in post-Hegelian history, including by virtue of displacing Hegel's claims for *Geist* onto the human consciousness. It appears—"the *historical* evidence shows"—that no history, personal or collective, can obey such a

principle; and, as Bataille brilliantly understood, there could be *economies* in which the value of loss becomes quite absolute or becomes the *highest* value, if such concepts as value or profit could be applied there. How does Hegel know? *Geist*, whose only excuse, to paraphrase Stendhal, is that it does not exist, may prefer losses after all.

Along with “its-own-ness” and *absolute property*—another name of Absolute Knowledge—the principle of wholeness and totalization will be equally undermined as a result. For, as we have seen, all wholeness and totalization always involves the relatively general presupposition of the possibility of wholeness, along with relatively specific conceptions of it. Hegel’s assertion “The True is the Whole” becomes untrue—that is, insofar as one could speak of “*the* Truth” any more than of “the Whole” along with “is.” We might in fact *not be able* even to think of or imagine the absolute whole, or of anything that would be something absolutely “itself,” “to itself,” “by itself” or “for itself” without any exterior. Nor, conversely, may we be able to think of the absolute whole *as* the absolute exterior, whether in terms of Being or “truth”—the “true” truth, or otherwise. There may be very powerful constraints and closures in this regard. We can conceive or postulate, it seems, most often by way of limit, that such things are possible: *Geist* in Hegel, “things in themselves” in Kant, or Being in Heidegger.

The fundamental inaccessibility of such structures, the prohibition on the knowledge of *how* they might be specifically structured, is often part and parcel of the claim. Philosophy wants, perhaps above all, to control its knowledge and to fully determine its own limit, which is in many ways the point where Derrida’s deconstruction begins. Philosophy wants to know what it knows and what it does not know. In Hegel, this limit is transgressed only by *Geist*, which at a certain point acquires the knowledge of its own limit—that is, of its own unknown, its absolute other. In this sense, Hegel is closer to Kant than it might appear, perhaps even than it has appeared to Hegel himself. One can also claim, of course, that one can conceive or imagine all these things. There have been claims of being able to imagine four-dimensional space. Heidegger, we recall, speaks of *true* time as four-dimensional. Maybe the human imagination does indeed have the potential to deal with four dimensions; probably nothing can be claimed to be absolutely impossible, either in thinking or the imagination. Certainly, the fact that we cannot conceive of or imagine

something does not mean that it cannot take “shape” or enjoy a mode of existence beyond our powers of conception. That observation would apply in particular to Bohr’s complementarity, or general economy in Bataille and Derrida, specifically insofar as it defines the relationships between the radical difference and the closure of representation. Nor, by the same token, would one want to exclude unimaginable configurations, which are often not imagined as yet, “unattempted yet in Prose or Rhyme.” Modern mathematics and science—in particular quantum physics—continually operate with what cannot be imagined or what needs to be conceived of or utilized as unimaginable. But we cannot, it appears, avoid certain constraints in making our claims to that effect.<sup>17</sup>

It appears that our cognitive apparatus demands wholeness, one might even say, with due precautions and quotation marks, demands it “physiologically”; but our conceptualization and language enable us and, at the limit, *force* us to move outside any given inside, thus making any whole into a part again. These relationships are irreducibly complementary. Hence as a full reduction of difference and complementarity, a full, absolute wholeness demands, at the very least, infinitude—a *conception*, now in its direct cognitive sense, that is far from unproblematic. These relations—part and whole, inside and outside, finitude and infinitude, and others that may be invoked here—are not quite identical, but are conditioned by the same closure or by similar closures constraining what can and cannot be claimed—at *the moment*. Everything can change. The constraints of the moment might, however, be very severe. “Cognitive” constraints have a great degree of permanence—hence the necessity of interpretive and conceptual closures such as the closure of presence or difference. We are as yet far from having articulated or assessed their limits.

Within the same closure, conversely, *absolute* otherness, or absolute exteriority, absolute difference, would not be possible, either. As every wholeness can always be again exteriorized, our cognitive and conceptual apparatus and our language will always enable us to incorporate any exteriority into a new unity. Hegel utilized the latter possibility, both against Kant and in general; at the final stage of incorporation-reduction of difference, it leads to the economy of Absolute Knowledge—“the Absolute incorporated,” “the un-limited inc/k.” Nietzsche, as we have seen, powerfully argues that Kant cannot in all rigor speak about “things in



themselves" any more than Hegel can speak of absolute interiorization or absolute wholeness. The constraints at issue enable the deconstruction of many reversals and lead to a different logic of neither . . . nor, either . . . or, both at once of which Derrida speaks (*Positions*, 42–43)—the logic of undecidability and then complementarity.

Such a logic, once again, would particularly apply to the opposition, thus made complementary, between "the outside" and "the inside." These relationships—in the end always of neither difference nor identity, but rather complementarity—occupy, *logically*, a crucial place in Derrida's analysis, from the spatial configuration so inscribed to the inside and the outside of philosophy, psychoanalysis, criticism, or literature. In all these cases, *radical alterity* must be inscribed otherwise than *absolute otherness*, while the opposition itself and all oppositions of philosophy, or the opposition between philosophy and its "others," would have to be reconceived by way of complementarity and within a given closure or closures. This necessity will reinforce the radical undermining of self-reflexivity, along with its counterpart absolute otherness. Neither an *absolute* inside—an absolute whole, "its own"—nor an *absolute* outside are possible. Everything can be separated. And everything, all border lines, can be overflowed from the unconscious exterior, which may be, to use another provisional term, "inaccessible" to any inside or to any outside. The relationships between "the part" and "the whole" must thus conform to complementarity and general economy.

*On the one hand*, it is "the part," the division of the whole or, structurally, the *division* that is irreducible. The One can only be the Many—the proposition that Nietzsche uses to define the Heraclitean in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*—which demands a radical plurality inconceivable to Hegel.

*On the other hand*—and such will have to be the logic throughout—the whole is never fully *reducible* to parts and differences alone. As throughout, their relations are complementary, and the complementarities abound. In the absence of absolute wholeness or absolute totality that would be fully in the presence and in control of all its parts and thus fully mastering or governing the differential play, we seem to be much better off by seeing, overall, any whole as emerging, at one point or another, from a play of parts or differences. At the same time, however, a division of parts presupposes and demands integration and organization

into unities. There can be, therefore, no absolute division, no absolute difference. We must instead inscribe the transformations neither in terms of the fully original or teleological totality nor in terms of a fully original fracture, nor, by the same token, in terms of absolute continuity or absolute rupture, but in terms of their and other complementary relations.

It is quite clear that total economies, whether of profit or loss, or unconditional totalities do not make good models. Most small economies are far too complex—too large—to be total. They require diversified portfolios, multiple strategies, plural styles of management. This fact, of course, includes local totalizations, profits, or interests or, conversely, local fragmentations, losses, or dis-interests. In order to be managed, they *cannot be only* managed, or only mis-managed in any given sense of management. They have to be played otherwise. But by the same token, they cannot be only *played*, either. The art of management demands a complementarity of management and play; and perhaps the best way to manage a *property* is to grasp, consciously or unconsciously, possibly against one's own claims, that there are many boundaries within. Would this imply living always on the borderlines or "Living on: Border lines," as the pun of Derrida's title suggests, "against Nietzsche, perhaps" (*Deconstruction and Criticism*, 125)? Perhaps, but then there is no one way of living. A property may be a theft or a debt, or complementarily both, or neither of these, at times not property, either.

The logic of unification is among metaphysics' most common and most persistent strategies, beginning with Parmenides.<sup>18</sup> Hegel, however, seems to have gone further than anyone else in following this logic. In Hegel, Absolute Self-Consciousness is the only wholeness that is possible as *absolute* wholeness. And, once one wants to maintain all these together—wholeness, reflexivity, infinity, truth—Hegel's formulations become nearly unassailable. "The True is the Whole," and it is the full, absolute self-consciousness. It is Absolute Knowledge. In this sense, once one follows its logic all the way, reflexivity can only be Hegelian. "In itself" or "by itself" and the metaphysics of the thing present "in itself" are most profoundly comprehended by Hegel, culminating in his famous "for itself" [*für sich*], which he opposes to "in itself" [*an sich*], and with which he mounts his critique of Kant.

As was suggested earlier, in order not to be taken over by Hegel, Kant

*must* have the unconscious, but refuses absolutely to have it, as does Hegel, who refuses to admit the unconscious into his unities. The unconscious is always radically bracketed; it is not even allowed as the outside worthy of philosophical consideration. A philosopher perhaps cannot allow herself or himself to take the unconscious into philosophical consideration; at least virtually every philosopher has done so from Descartes or Socrates to Husserl and Heidegger. In the absence of the unconscious, Kant makes Hegel possible and even necessary. Inside—as in Hegel and his *Geist*—or outside—as in Kant and his “the thing in itself” of consciousness or Absolute Consciousness, or the *absolute* unconscious, “itself” or “in itself” is already the logic of the absolute before it even becomes “for itself,” as the logic of absolute self-consciousness in Hegel. It is the absoluteness of the absolute. Self-consciousness, self-reflection, and self-referentiality thus remain fundamentally related to the question of presence and continuum; as we have seen, such is the case for all metaphysical subjectivity, conscious and unconscious.

The undermining or, or as, overflowing of consciousness and self-consciousness begins with Nietzsche in the grand style of utmost clarity and directness. I hesitate to say ‘simplicity,’ although Nietzsche himself often used this word. If it is simplicity, it is a simplicity of tremendous analytic power and depth and of great *complexity*. Much that is at stake here, as we have seen, has to do with simplicity, with the (im)possibility of the simple. I shall cite first a remarkable note from *The Will to Power* where Nietzsche anticipates a great deal of Freud, suggesting, among other things, the necessity of pursuing a “*project for scientific psychology*,” as, of course, Freud’s first major project attempted to do. The relations between “biology” and “knowledge” become crucial once one relates “matter” and “the unconscious,” as most of the authors at issue, on the side of criticism, do in one way or another—certainly Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida. These relations also serve Nietzsche’s critique of the naive conceptions of the unconscious and its forces:

Of the multifariousness of knowledge. To trace one’s own relationships to many other things (or the relationship of kind)—how should that be “knowledge” of other things! The way of knowing and of knowledge is itself already part of the conditions of existence: so that the

conclusion that there could be no other kind of intellect (for us) than that which preserves us is precipitate: this actual condition of existence is perhaps only accidental and perhaps in no way necessary.

Our apparatus for acquiring knowledge is not *designed* for “knowledge.” (*The Will to Power*, 272–73; KSA 11:183–84)

It would be most instructive to juxtapose these and related passages in Nietzsche with the passages from Hegel discussed in Chapter 4: “The True is the Whole. . . .” Throughout his later and some of his earlier texts, Nietzsche insists on the unconscious inhibition of so-called conscious processes. “Philosophical thinking” is no exception: “After having looked long enough between the philosopher’s lines and fingers, I say to myself: by far the greater part of conscious thinking must still be included among instinctive activities, and that goes even for philosophical thinking” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 11; KSA 5:17). Nietzsche offers another extraordinary elaboration earlier in *The Gay Science*, again brilliantly anticipating Freud, most specifically on “the conflicts of drives” in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*:

For the longest time, conscious thought was considered thought itself. Only now the truth dawns on us that by far the greatest part of our spirit’s activity remains unconscious and unfelt. But I suppose that these drives [Triebe] which are here contending against one another understand very well how to make themselves felt by, and how to hurt, *one another*. This may very well be the source of that sudden and violent exhaustion that afflicts all thinkers (it is the exhaustion on a battlefield). Indeed, there may be occasions of concealed *heroism* in our warring depths, but certainly nothing divine that eternally rests in itself, as Spinoza supposed. *Conscious* thinking, especially that of the philosopher, is the least vigorous and therefore also the relatively mildest and calmest form of thinking; and thus precisely philosophers are most apt to be led astray about the nature of knowledge. (*The Gay Science*, 262; KSA 3:559; translation modified)

The relation to the unconscious thus crucially conditions Nietzschean economy and perspectival vision which, one might add, are thereby different from many forms of relativism that have subsequently emerged in history and that often remain within the limits of restricted economy, particularly within the limits of consciousness. Short of inscribing the

unconscious or, more precisely, the “effects” responsible for the introduction of the unconscious from Nietzsche and Freud on, no economy, however relativized, would suffice. The unconscious or complementarities engaging it cannot, by definition, control the field absolutely; other complementarities are possible and necessary, and can constitute areas of theoretical or historical interest. But a comprehensive theoretical matrix must account for the “effects” of the unconscious no less than a comprehensive theory of quantum fields must account for uncertainty relations. The Nietzschean economy is a general economy. As such, it destroys the unity of consciousness and thus all unity—the unity of unity—and sets up the conditions for a comprehensive dismantling and refiguration, such as deconstruction, of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. Nietzsche, with the same exquisite logic, continues *contra* truth, here against Kant, but also Hegel, and *pro* the unconscious in *Beyond Good and Evil*. The passage also gives one of the most profound, although by no means the only, meanings to Nietzsche’s title:

The falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment; in this respect our new language may sound strangest. The question is to what extent it is life-promoting, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-breeding. And we are fundamentally inclined to claim that the falsest judgments (which include the synthetic judgments *a priori*) are the most indispensable for us; that without accepting the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live—that renouncing false judgments would mean renouncing life and denial of life. To recognize untruth as a condition of life—that certainly means resisting accustomed value feelings in a dangerous way; and a philosophy that risks this would by that token alone place itself beyond good and evil. (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 11–12; KSA 5:18; translation modified)

It has taken about a century to recognize the degree of the theoretical and, by now, the practical and political force of Nietzsche’s “strange—beyond good and evil—new language” and his critique of consciousness and everything based upon it: the theory and practice of history, philosophy, religion, ethics and morality, aesthetics, and many other things. This

"new language" had to be developed in the works of, among others, Freud, Bataille, Lacan, Althusser, Deleuze, Foucault, and Derrida. Nietzsche's discourse does not have equal significance in all these cases. But "the tremendous consequences [die ungeheuren Folgen]," to use Nietzsche's own phrase in *Daybreak* (41; KSA 2:63), of his text are unquestionable at this point.

One must also recognize the force of the conscious and unconscious repression of Nietzsche in some of the cases just mentioned, such as in Freud. Hard as Freud tried to repress or, as Derrida shows, *consciously* to "avoid" Nietzsche,<sup>19</sup> he borrowed enormously from Nietzsche, even though he also contributed enormously to and developed these ideas. Certainly, Freud can never be left aside whenever the unconscious is at issue. Beginning with its title, *Beyond Good and Evil* is already "beyond the pleasure principle," whether Freud, in his title and analysis, is conscious of it or whether "Nietzsche" operates from the unconscious of Freud's text.

Derrida's analysis further develops these ideas, and Hegel, "the name of the problem 'Hegel,'" occupies a singular *position* against which deconstructive *positions* are played out. This relation is so marked that, as we have seen, "if there were a definition of *différance*" it could only be as that which radically dislocates "the limit, the interruption, the destruction of" "Hegel" and *Aufhebung* "wherever it operates." But this destruction takes place, importantly, "at the limit" (*Positions*, 41; *Positions*, 55). This dislocation and deconstruction are indissociable from a radical dislocation and deconstruction of wholeness and reflexivity, but, let me reiterate, are equally a refiguration of their functioning and limits under general economic conditions. The dislocation of self-reflexivity particularly concerns the—general—economy of *différance* "itself"—an expression that in relation to *différance*, and through *différance* everywhere, can function only under erasure. *Différance* will "itself" differ from and defer "itself" in transformations far more radical and violent than the Hegelian self-reflexive becoming and violently dislocating self-reflexivity. It would further follow, that "it" irreducibly *disseminates* into other names and structures. "It" cannot be comprehended under any single name, within an accountable set, or by any contained or controlled plurality. The deconstruction of "in itself" and "by itself" inscribed in these transformations is the deconstruction of many things, but always the

deconstruction of Hegelian reflexivity and self-reflexivity—Hegel’s defining “for itself” [*für sich*—along with absolute wholeness. Whenever Derrida speaks of *différance* “itself” [*elle-même*], differing from and deferring “itself,” he always takes “itself” under erasure (*Margins*, 67; *Marges*, 77–78), or at least one should always do so; on occasion, things get forgotten. *Différance* demands the erasure of “itself” or “for itself” *itself*.

The unconscious in general economy cannot, therefore, be self-directed, self-reflexive, or self-contained. It cannot be “self”-anything. In this sense, rhetorically tempting as the term the “self-unconscious” may be, particularly against Hegel, it cannot be used in all rigor. The “un” in “the un-conscious” suspends “the self”—rigorously, but irreducibly.

## Double Binds

The question of the conditions of the possibility or the impossibility of self-referentiality, whether conscious or unconscious, is also that of the separation—or inseparability or both at once or at once both and neither—of the logical levels of theoretical accounts, or indeed any discourse. This problem has been prominent in modern intellectual history—from Bertrand Russell to Gregory Bateson, let us say. Bateson’s famous expression “the double bind” was introduced in the context of Freud, and Derrida has used it many times in relation to the economy of deconstruction. This separation of levels is *in the end* never possible, if the whole matrix is good enough for the possibly incomprehensible complexity, or the possibly incomprehensible simplicity, of the underlying play.

As elsewhere, one must figure or, against classical logic, re-figure the effects of separation, specifically various “schizophrenic” effects, in Bateson’s sense. The latter effects occur when one needs to maintain the separation of levels but is unable to do so; in the field of formal logic, this economy finally leads to undecidability, making the entire field finally undecidable. Similar economies are operative, however, well beyond the field of logic and mathematics, particularly in the natural sciences, where, for example, the complementarity of quantum physics irreducibly depends upon and successfully utilizes a radically schizophrenic apparatus. Double binds make this suspension of decidability possible and, at certain points, necessary.

Hegel's logic, especially, in both *Logics*, was already a response to this problem of difference in levels of discourse. It was an attempt to offer a richer and more complex economy of logical and philosophical thinking and to move to a logic beyond logic. Hegel would juxtapose his logic, on the one hand, to mathematical formalism, where the logical levels and metalevels might be separated and, on the other hand, to historical knowledge as collecting the "historical facts."

Reflection in Hegel can be compared to the higher levels of knowledge in Bateson. Bateson, to be precise, speaks of levels of learning; but the conception may be appropriated without significant displacement to other aspects of knowledge, such as production of *new* knowledge. Bateson's higher levels—"knowledge about knowledge" as against "information"—is always at issue in Hegel, is even the main issue, given the role of knowledge as knowledge's self-knowledge and consciousness's self-consciousness in Hegel. Hence Hegel's insistence on the form [Form] and the shape [Gestalt] of knowledge along with the content [Inhalt] of the information. One can read some of the progressions of the *Phenomenology*, from consciousness to self-consciousness to reason to *Geist* to absolute self-consciousness along these lines. Hegel certainly never resolves this opposition between knowledge and metaknowledge simply or naively. There is more than one opposition in Hegel, given, to begin with, the difference and, at the same time, the opposition between *Form* and *Gestalt*. The levels of Hegel's resolutions, synthesis, and *Aufhebung* in this or any other respect are important. The Preface, subtitled "On Scientific Cognition [Vom wissenschaftlichen Erkennen]," which is, at the human level, philosophical cognition, primarily deals with knowledge about knowledge, especially knowledge and philosophy about philosophy itself.

Although the latter might in fact define the very enterprise of philosophy, Hegel arguably pursued it further than anyone else—to the limit. "The goal" of Science [Wissenschaft] as *Geist* "is *Geist*'s insight into what knowledge [Wissen] is" (*Phenomenology*, 17; *Werke* 3:33). The task involves not only the knowledge of "everything" on the part of *Geist*, but also the knowledge of everything about how anything and everything is known and can be known at every point. *Geist*'s conscious and self-conscious meditation-mediation is finally the absolute record and absolute machine of all knowledge. It contains and maintains all information, all "know-how," and all levels of "know-how."



In attacking knowledge without mediation, Hegel, anticipating Bateson, simultaneously suggests that knowledge is impossible without “know-how,” which becomes thus a crucial aspect of mediation: “Impatience demands the impossible, to wit, the attainment of the end without means” (*Phenomenology*, 17; *Werke* 3:33). In this sense, an abstract Absolute is in fact impossible. For the universalizations involved are part of the process of knowledge and must be spelled out by mediation. All facts and knowledge are produced, mediated, involving “know-how” of all sorts—*ideologies* in the generic sense of the term. If anything, “knowledge” in Hegel is not mediated enough. “Monochromatic formalism,” “dogmatisms,” or conversely mind-less or spirit-less “historicisms,” are possible in various degrees, of course, as human attitudes toward philosophy and history.

This mediation, as we have seen, fundamentally structures the Notion and its history. Conversely, all the “content” possible for any shape and form, or method, of knowledge will necessarily be present to the mediation, since they had taken place in history. In *Geist*’s economy, nothing unnecessary happens. There is no waste of resources of any kind. This is a kind of knowledge that characterizes the true Science. The latter is, therefore, a crucial stage of self-consciousness, although such an economy is possible in full measure only as Absolute Knowledge. Fundamentally, such is Hegel’s great discovery, no other economy is possible—no ideology without history or history without ideology. This conception is close to the modern understanding, which is not surprising, given that everyone had, in one form or another, read or misread Hegel, or read those who read or misread Hegel. The difference would be the underlying economy of transformations, whether as finally realized or as a model that conditions a given understanding or theory, and then the modes of inscription. This difference would, once again, lead to the difference between restricted and general economies of interpretation and history. The latter difference, however, would pertain to the modern, even the current, scene as well; for not all current theories are general economies—far from it.

Hegel thus envisions *Geist*’s self-consciousness in the full and fully conscious self-presence of all “means” of knowledge:

But the *length* of this path has to be endured, because, for one thing, each moment is necessary; and further, each moment has to be *lingered*

over [verweilen], because each itself is a complete individual shape, and one is only viewed in absolute perspective when its determinateness is regarded as the *concrete* whole, or the whole is regarded as uniquely qualified by that determination. Since the Substance of the individual, the World-Spirit itself, has had the patience to pass through these forms over the long passage of time, and to take upon itself the enormous labor of world-history, in which it embodied in each shape as much of its entire content as that shape was capable of holding, and since it could not have attained consciousness of itself by any lesser effort, the individual certainly cannot by nature of the case comprehend his own substance more easily. (*Phenomenology*, 17; *Werke* 3:33–34; translation modified)

Hegel, however, immediately points out that the possession and utilization of forms and shapes of knowledge facilitate knowledge in general—but in particular and by definition, its self-conscious dimensions. *Geist*'s labor is always most efficient; and its task is enormous. One would not be doing justice to Hegel's complexity and brilliance without citing another great passage from the Preface, in which this economy is supplemented, perhaps also in Derrida's sense of supplement as productive of origins, by a Dionysian economy, possibly via Plato's *Symposium*:

[T]he True is the Bacchanalian revel in which no member is not drunk; yet because each member dissolves as soon as he separates, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose. Judged in the court of this movement, the single shapes of Spirit do not persist any more than determinate thoughts do, but they are as much positive and necessary moments, as they are negative and evanescent. (*Phenomenology*, 27–28; *Werke* 3:46; translation modified)

This and related elaborations introduce important, at times crucial nuances, which cannot be fully considered here. But they also show the enormous conceptual and metaphoric resources of Hegel's text, from which subsequent thinking—here specifically Nietzsche, the Dionysian philosopher—has borrowed and against which it must be seen.

"The revelation of the depth of *Geist* [that] is *the absolute Notion*" and Absolute Knowledge would emerge at the highest level of cognition which contains every possible "know-how," at every level. But it is, it seems, as free of double binds, all resolved there, as devoid of an unconscious. "It seems," for again Hegel does not make a claim that he fully knows how

*Geist's* knowledge—*Geist's* “know-how”—and Absolute Knowledge work. Hegel *seems* to claim enough knowledge, however, for one to conclude that Absolute Knowledge is also the final disentanglement of all double binds, or that it is concerned with self-consciousness to begin with. This disentanglement may be seen as a necessary condition of the best knowledge.

Or is it? How necessary? Always necessary? And if so, is it a sufficient condition? According to Bateson, the highest levels of knowledge would contain a great deal of the unconscious, or rather of unconscious consciousness, those “reasons of the heart, which reason does not know” of which Pascal speaks. Once subjected to reasons, however, this unconscious might still be too Hegelian, and thus not radical enough. Hegel wants to make all reasons conscious and to understand all reasons behind reasons as well. He wants to merge science and consciousness, whose complementarity, however, which is the only possible merger, cannot be achieved without the unconscious. This is what Science and philosophy must be in Hegel—the understanding of reasons behind reasons, the incessant and interminable “Why?”

One might question, therefore, not only the underlying *restricted* economy of presence and consciousness, or the metaphysical unconscious, but also the unconditional necessity and desirability of an incessant investigation of “why.” One might then question the necessity of interminable analysis in any given field or economy, restricted or general: in philosophy, history, politics, psychoanalysis, or literary criticism and theory. There could be and often need be interminable, highly conscious and self-conscious, analyses. But there might also be and often need be “short sessions” such in Nietzsche or Lacan, highly un-(self-)conscious play, and many combinations of both. There can be no unique style; and, while in fact always plural, the economy of style may, and at times must, generate the effects of a singular style—logical or singularly playful.

*Geist*, finally, as Absolute Knowledge and its absolute and absolutely conscious and self-conscious memory, never *forgets* to reflect on what it is doing and knowing. Absolute Knowledge knows what it knows, how it knows what it knows, and so on, at all levels. In contrast to a “knowledge that is not a knowledge at all” of the general economy, it knows what it knows with that which is truly knowledge—the knowledge. For such a mind or spirit, Niels Bohr’s “A great idea is one the opposite of which is

also deep truths are standard conditions, with the crucial difference that there is no *Aufhebung*—the difference between dialectic and complementarity—by way of the general economy. In fact, *Geist* has nothing but deep truths and great ideas. It operates perhaps at what Bateson sees as knowledge at Level IV, which, according to Bateson, does not occur in humans—just as Absolute Knowledge is beyond human capacity—but which is perhaps conceivable. “*Learning IV* would be *change in Learning III*, but probably does not occur in any adult living organism on this earth. Evolutionary process has, however, created organisms whose ontogeny brings them to Level III. The combination of the philogenesis with ontogenesis, in fact achieves Level IV” (*Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 293). Bohr’s “idea” corresponds pretty much to Bateson’s Level III, a kind of poetic knowledge such as in Blake (306); it can be only complementarity of knowledge—or un-knowledge—and unconsciousness, no matter what Hegel or Blake would want or claim. A highly complex creative and transformational economy of memory would follow. It is memory that shapes, creates, and transforms in order to remember, but to remember by understanding and not mechanically. This conception has a long history, beginning with Socrates, who opposes writing on these grounds, but it does not lack implications of great significance for some rather new things, particularly once this economy is refigured as the general economy and as complementarity.<sup>20</sup>

That last qualification is crucial, of course, for otherwise such an economy would not or no longer suffice, at least not since Nietzsche. This economy is once again complex in Hegel, too, and one must take into account its subtle nuances. But these nuances will *not* change the difference of the unconscious and inhibition—the double bind—at issue. At no level of nuance and complexity will Hegel tolerate them. Hegel indicates many double binds in his texts, much more successfully than he is able to avoid them by employing the ingenuity of all logic, in every sense conceivable. Beyond these, however, there are double binds that Hegel did not and, as I have said, perhaps could not dream of. Hegel did not have enough of a theoretical unconscious to dream of them. There is a progress of knowledge, “a grand march of intellect,” although not in Hegel’s sense, to be sure, of either progress or knowledge. In a certain sense, Hegel is right in attacking the unconscious because it will undoubtedly always inhibit and undermine the kind of knowledge that Hegel wants.

Different forms of knowledge and theory become available, however, by way of pursuing rather than dismissing the unconscious. They will *conserve* enough Hegel; without *Aufhebung*, they will in fact conserve more Hegel than *Aufhebung* could. The *Aufhebung* will operate there, as also elsewhere, within its non-Hegelian limits, even while negation and conservation proceed by way of a different economy. It is a different theory, a different play, a different performance, a different theater, and also a different dream—a different *appearance* perhaps—as these terms indicate within the “same” closure. But even this closure can only be the same as the radical—non-Hegelian—difference. Hegel’s logic is thus not powerful enough. It is not powerful enough precisely as *human* logic. The configuration of knowledge demands a more radical disruption and a more complex comprehension of classical logic. Classical logic, of course, includes some of Hegel’s logic as well. *Geist* and above all Absolute Knowledge are, however, no longer good enough *as* logic. A deconstruction of Absolute Knowledge in Derrida in *Glas* and elsewhere might be seen as always re-inscribing a double bind of one kind or another into Hegelian chains. This deconstruction then recomprehends these chains via these double binds and the unconscious, but within the *general* economy thus engaged.

This “logic” leaves us with an ineluctable, incurable, theoretical schizophrenia, and many an undecidable, perhaps ultimately with everything ultimately undecidable. It leaves us with the impossibility of ever fully disentangling double binds and separating levels of knowledge. It leaves us at a different end, certainly different from Hegel’s end—in the end, the dead end, of Absolute Knowledge. It points to different “ends of man” and a different sense of the question “Who are we?” We might, however, have to learn to live with this—anyhow incurable—schizophrenia rather than repress it. We might even enjoy it, as Nietzsche seemed to do; and at the very least, beyond the exploration of undecidability, it still allows us to proceed by way of complementarity. It is, moreover, more logical than much classical logic, formal or transcendental.

Perhaps the highest level of knowledge is the level of the irreducible entanglement of levels, of irreducible double binds. Such a knowledge necessitates at times the maximal entanglement possible, and that entanglement may and at times must be deliberately engaged, although, by the

same token, one cannot calculate all the effects of entanglement or of the double bind. Perhaps “the” “best” “knowledge”—a knowledge that thus can never be absolute—is radically schizophrenic—a knowledge mad enough to be true, as again Niels Bohr, the great anti-epistemological revolutionary, would have it. This is an understanding to which Bateson made an extraordinary contribution, and he did so via *the unconscious*, via Freud.<sup>21</sup>

The logic or complementary logic-nonlogic that leads to the unconscious and undermines Hegel’s logic is a highly complex economy. As follows from the analysis given earlier, it is in a sense also empirical or experimental, even as it puts into question the value of empiricism or experimentalism. By virtue of this logic, however, it is “true” or true enough that the truths of philosophy are untrue, are only “the truths of masks”—the *proposition* that Nietzsche was first to offer. By the same token, one must question the truth of truth itself, making it always into “a kind of error.” But Nietzsche also claims that it is necessary to accept an error and to understand that these truths are always errors—philosophical errors, critical errors, Nietzsche’s errors—that must be accepted as “truths.” It is necessary to understand the *necessity* of error.

Hegel, who cannot believe in the necessity of error, wants, as we have seen, memory without the unconscious, an unerring memory—Absolute Knowledge, the absolute machine, the *perpetuum mobile* of *consciousness*. Like most thinkers of *perpetuum mobile*, Hegel, Derrida suggests, “*could never think . . . a machine that would work. That would work without, to this extent, being governed by the order of reappropriation. Such a functioning would be unthinkable in that it inscribes within itself an effect of pure loss. It would be unthinkable as a non-thought that no thought could relever [Aufhebung], constituting its proper opposite, as its other. Doubtless philosophy would see in this a nonfunctioning, a non-work; and thereby philosophy would miss that which, in such a machine, works. By itself. Outside. [Tout seul. Dehors.]*” (*Margins*, 107; *Marges*, 126; translation modified). From, and against, Hegel to Nietzsche to Freud to Bataille, a great de-constructor of machines and Derrida’s main [re]source here, to Derrida, the issue is the exteriorization that in the end cannot be contained, cannot be interiorized, leading to the radical unconscious and radical historicity. Two books and two bookkeepings—Hegel’s and *Geist*’s—that must come together at the end of the book, *The*

*Phenomenology of Spirit*, can do so only to the extent that there is only one book—Hegel's.

The energy of Hegel's effort is enormous; and "Hegel," Hegel's text, still uses the resources of this energy against the entropy of time, which is also the energy of critics or, at times, the lack of energy on the part of easy admirers. As must every *perpetuum mobile*, Absolute Knowledge must stop at some point, as its first—and last—book, the *Phenomenology*, stops; and like any other machine, neither can work by itself or on its own. But then, enabled by an unperceived, unconscious—schizophrenic—exteriority, something else begins to work, in and under the same name—the name of *Geist*, the name of Hegel—or against *Geist*, against Hegel; or, complementarily, both.

# **HISTORY AS COMPLEMENTARITY**

Gewiss, wir brauchen die Historie,  
aber wir brauchen sie anders . . .

—Nietzsche

**CHAPTER**



Against and in the shadow of Hegel, the preceding analysis suggests that a complementary economy of history can be organized around the complementarity of history and the unconscious, or a triple complementarity of history, matter, and the unconscious. The present chapter develops this economy in more technical—conceptual or, complementarily, conceptual and anti-conceptual—terms.

The first section is mainly an analysis of Nietzsche's "attitudes towards history." It also offers a discussion of Freud's views of history, contrasting two unconscious economies of historicity—Freud's restricted economy and Nietzsche's general and complementary economy. Freud's vision of history remains Hegelian, in spite of his reversal of Hegel by grounding history in the unconscious, and is in conflict with Freud's own analysis of memory and psychic processes, whose radical potential Freud undermines in his historical investigations.

The second section explores Freud's local model as extended by Derrida's matrix, leading to the general economy of history and complementarity of history and the unconscious, or again history, materiality, and the unconscious. This complementarity, in part developed in the preced-



ing chapters, is presented here in more technical terms, mostly by means of the Freud-Derrida interface, although Nietzsche, Bataille, and general ideas on complementarity continue to remain decisive throughout, and other frames of reference, such as Marx, Heidegger, and Benjamin, are also engaged.

The third section is a closing summary of the complementary economy of history.

### History in Freud and Nietzsche

The major figures of this study—Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida—have not been associated with historical thinking, at least not until recently. Indeed, more recent discussions reflect a change of attitude toward these thinkers and give much more attention to the historical dimensions of their work.<sup>1</sup> Previously they, especially Nietzsche, have been associated, on the one hand, correctly, with the critique of historicism and, on the other, much more problematically, if not altogether without reason, with ahistorical and antihistorical thinking.

To one degree or another, their work could be characterized by a suspension of classical economies of history and causality, either by refiguring them in a different economy of the *historical* or at times by suspending historicity altogether. This suspension is necessary. As I have stressed from the outset of this study, under the conditions of general economy, 'history' itself cannot always be historical. There is *no name*, and *no concept*, that anything can *always* or *only* be. In approaching the questions and practices of historical description or theory of history, a general economy and complementarity must, therefore, under certain conditions suspend any form of historicity—the quality of being historical—of the processes and representations it considers. Neither the historical character of things nor historical representations—neither *Geschichte* nor *Historie*—are absolutely indispensable; and, beyond a radical reconsideration of the economy of history in all of its aspects general economy entails, both can be suspended altogether at many points where classical theories and practices of history and historical representation and analysis would claim them necessary. There may always be a history underneath a nonhistory, a nonhistory beneath history, and so on; and these often pass into each other, and often interminably so. They are, to use another one of Derrida's terms, always *iterable* and *reiterable*. Histor-

ical or nonhistorical, whatever is juxtaposed to history can refer here only to a given conception or spectrum of conceptions. For it follows that the historical or the ahistorical do not exist in general, and no definite claim can be made on the structure of the underlying play.

That structure may not be able to be identified or isolated as only one or another type; also, it may not be anything that a given closure or set of closures would offer. It *must* be seen as a radical, but never absolute difference, to which, as “process,” no given or higher form of presence or nonpresence, difference, or anything, can be assigned, whether as that which can be accessed or that which cannot. Applied to the question of history, this suspension will demand jointly the general economy and complementarity of history and define the difference of such a matrix from classical or restricted economies of understanding history.

There must be, then, ahistorical and antihistorical layers to Nietzsche’s and other texts at issue, leading to corresponding views of their positions, for example, as anti-historical. The latter perspective has habitually ignored the plurality of these positions and styles. If, however, and to the extent that these texts may be seen as relating more to the “unconscious” than to the “historical” strata of the general economy of history, “historical” strata could be amply supplied by other proper names of, and in the margins of, this study, such as Hegel, to begin with, Marx, Heidegger, or Althusser. All these texts have both critical or deconstructive and precritical—classical or metaphysical—dimensions. Without these texts and their impact—historical, political, theoretical, and textual—on their readers and, or often *as*, independent theorists, a general economy of history would be impossible. Mutual deconstruction, however—history against the metaphysical unconscious, the unconscious against the metaphysical history—would need to be applied to many of these texts.

The *historical* dimension of the thinking, or writing, of the thinkers, or writers, of “the unconscious” and of general economy in turn remains crucial, however, whether, as in Bataille, by virtue of their affinities with Hegelian and Marxist historical thinking, or as in Nietzsche, by virtue of their critique of metaphysical historicism, or both at once. Nietzsche’s, Bataille’s, and Derrida’s works are characterized by multiple historical dimensions and, in fact, by an *insistence* on historicity, critically—general economically—conceived, along with the critique of classical or meta-

physical historicity; and this critique is often necessitated more by historical than by ahistorical or antihistorical concerns.

In contrast to traditional views, more recent discussion of these figures, specifically of Nietzsche, explores and at times stresses the historical dimensions of their work.<sup>2</sup> This change of attitude also reflects changes on the recent intellectual scene, which has been characterized—even dominated—by historical, political, and ideological concerns, in part as a result of the powerful impact of Foucault's analysis during the last decade. Nietzsche's influence is pervasive in many of Foucault's projects, especially during the middle stage, which may be seen as initiated by the essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." Of course, Foucault's work is as much a critique of traditional historicism as it is an affirmation of a more Nietzschean, more genealogical historicity.<sup>3</sup>

*On the Genealogy of Morals* is perhaps the central, and certainly the most prominent and influential of Nietzsche's texts in which history, memory, and the unconscious are introduced and are joined along complementary and general economic lines. As will be seen, these attitudes, and specifically historical thinking, can be found throughout Nietzsche's works, even in the earliest ones,<sup>4</sup> but escalating in *Human, All Too Human*, which opens with the question of history set against philosophy. *The Gay Science*, which in many ways defines Nietzsche's writing as "not originally subordinate to the logos and to truth," contains extraordinary insights and elaborations on the subject of history; and so do most of Nietzsche's other major works. The preeminence of the *Genealogy* and its impact in this respect are undeniable, however. The relationships between history and the unconscious in the *Genealogy* have come into prominence relatively recently with the emergence, particularly in France, of the "new" Nietzsche in deconstruction, Deleuze, Foucault; the "feminist" Nietzsche, specifically in the critical encounters of Kofman, Cixous, and Irigaray with Nietzschean texts; and other areas of contemporary criticism. But these developments may have also been a prolonged effect of deferral of the "historical" Nietzsche, particularly by way of a Heideggerian detour.<sup>5</sup> One needs to derive a similar matrix from Freud's ideas in order to pursue history as the unconscious, rather than use Freud's own global models of history, a point on which I shall comment before discussing Nietzsche's attitudes toward history.

## Freud

The distinction between Freud's local economy—memory—and Freud's global economy—history—is not unequivocal and not always effective; at a certain point, however, it is useful and to a degree necessary. For one needs a "global" model based on Freud's microeconomics of memory and psyche, to be considered in the next section, that would prohibit historical totalization. Freud's macroeconomics of history remains a restricted, and totalizing, economy, even though his models of history are designed to incorporate the effects of the unconscious. As Derrida points out: "The irreducibility of the 'effect of deferral' [*à-retardement*]*—such, no doubt, is Freud's discovery. Freud exploits this discovery in its ultimate consequences, beyond the psychoanalysis of the individual, and he thought that the history of culture ought to confirm it. In *Moses and Monotheism* (1937), the efficacy of delay and of action subsequent to the event [*l'efficace du retardement et de l'après-coup*] is at work over large historical intervals" (*Writing and Difference*, 203; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 303; translation modified).*

The complexities of all such transfers are formidable, and they become a major factor in the question of potential "complicity with positivism and metaphysics in Freud's text." In the case of the question of history, this complicity in Freud, as in many others, has specific proper names—Hegel as the name of metaphysics, even in the name of the unconscious, and Marx as the name of positivism. As we have seen, the richness and diversity of history, as actual history, or of memory resist, "empirically" as it were, Hegelian or Marxist economy, and particularly, in the latter case, precisely *as* the economy, the political economy, of real, "empirical" history. A more interactive and a more heterogeneous—complementary—economy of memory and history becomes necessary. This complementary economy enhances the theoretical and metaphoric play in either direction—from memory to history and from history to memory. But it also prohibits any unconditional and unproblematized mapping, particularly in the direction from the individual to the historical, which is one of the most common gestures in intellectual history. Such a general economy of history is indeed enabled by "the irreducibility of 'the effect of deferral,'" or rather the *effects*, for there can never be only one such effect. It follows from Freud's theories, even if Freud himself was unwilling or

unable to derive these consequences in full measure, reducing his theories of history to restricted economies. As such they reveal, or conceal, a form of the *repression* of difference and history, in the name of history, difference and *repression* itself—a repression of history and of the unconscious in the names of the unconscious and history.

It is worth noting that Derrida's inscription of *différance*, *trace*, and *writing* utilizes a more general matrix of memory and the unconscious, relatively independent from the Oedipal economy on which Freud's historical conceptions depend more crucially than does his theory of memory, particularly in his early works. Derrida's major texts in "Freud and the Scene of Writing" could be said, though with a degree of caution, to come from either the pre-Oedipal or the post-Oedipal period in Freud. Notably, in his remark on "Moses and Monotheism" just cited, he again refers to the underlying general matrix of deferral. The same is also the case in Derrida's later analysis, in *The Post Card*, of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*—the text extremely important for and often referred to in "Freud and the Scene of Writing" as well. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* does suggest, of course, very extended, more biological and evolutionary, historical conceptions and hypotheses. The latter, however, have a different relation to the question of history. They may lead to global historical and social views analogous to various forms of social Darwinism or to materialism and history in Marxism; to be sure, both—"Marx" and "Darwin"—have in the shadow of, and against Hegel, a long history of relationships. Freud, as opposed to the more Oedipal *Moses and Monotheism* and related texts, does not on that occasion make claims on the mediation between psychological, or biological, universals and human history. Freud, in fact, is customarily cautious concerning all moves from the biological to the psychological, let alone the historical.

"The [general] effect of deferral," or rather the Oedipal economy as such, that conditions the totalization of history in Freud, proceeds, however, by way of Lamarck against Darwin, a *detour* that is a complex and interesting issue in its own terms. The matrix of deferral, of course, fundamentally conditions the Oedipal economy itself, and as such is a more general matrix. The conjunction cannot be ignored, however. Deleuze and Guattari effectively, and with a "burst of laughter," the laughter which is no doubt also Bataille's, link Oedipalism and Hegelianism in Freud: "For these [Oedipal destructions] are Hegel-style destructions,

ways of conserving [Car ce sont des destructions à la Hegel, des manières de conserver]" (*Anti-Oedipus*, 311; *L'Anti-Oedipe*, 371).

Basing history on "the irreducibility of 'the effect of deferral,'" Freud then maintains the *unity*—a Hegelian unity—of *history* and *culture* and the unity of man, at least the unity of the question itself—"Who are we?"—if not the answer to it. The case is similar to the relationship between "Hegel" and Marx and materiality. Hegel's idealist economy of History as the History of, and as, (Self-)Consciousness is impossible. But the kind of Hegelian economy of history that Freud suggests is even less possible than Hegelian idealist history under the conditions of the unconscious, and still less under the conditions of a materialist unconscious. In the complementarity with "matter," "the unconscious"—Nietzsche's and Freud's great discovery—prohibits Hegelian history.

Freud cannot have both the unconscious and Hegel; and as in Marx, the difference of Freud's conceptions from Hegel's and related forms of the idealism of the unconscious, which Freud relentlessly attacks, is crucial. Against Freud—or using Freud against Freud—the "transfer" of Freud's local economy of the irreducible effects of deferral into a global historical level will radically disrupt the universal and universals. This "transfer" radically *localizes* the latter through the unconscious rather than allowing one to incorporate the unconscious and its irreducible effects of deferral into the universal. It prohibits universal history of any kind, whether as Hegel's World History or as Freud's history of culture.

The history of culture would, thus, seem to confirm Freud's discovery differently or confirm a different discovery by Freud. The irreducibility of the effect of deferral makes all universal models of history untenable. Freud's writings on history and his other universal claims remain fundamentally problematic, and these problems would clearly extend beyond *Moses and Monotheism* to other later texts such as *Totem and Taboo* and particularly *Civilization and its Discontents*. The last, beginning with Freud's response to Romain Rolland's views on religion, offers a strong critique of global theology or ontotheology and thus of the Hegelianism of the history of culture. The German title is "*Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*." But, like other texts at issue at the moment, it also proceeds by totalizing history.

Broader collective and *historical Freudian* effects—the *historical func-*

tioning of the irreducible effects of deferral—must be accounted for, of course. They are indispensable to any general economy of the historical, which may need to depend on Freud's metaphorical models, local and to a degree global, and on the interaction between them.<sup>6</sup> In particular, such effects are crucial for our understanding of the cultural, or social and political, reduction of difference by the force of repression as part of "the intersubjective violence of writing," which has a powerful historical force as well.<sup>7</sup> Freud has exposed this socio-psychological conflict with extraordinary power in his later texts, including *Moses and Monotheism*. Deferral is enhanced and prolonged by the social and political forces of conflict and repression, which affect both the individual psyche over shorter historical intervals, and societies and civilizations—and their discontents—over longer ones.

In this context, Freud's recourse in his historical studies to Darwin and Lamarck has considerable interest and significance. I shall not consider this complex issue in detail. Given the enormity of the mediation between the biological and the psychological and then the historico-political, different biological theories, such as Darwin's and Lamarck's, can lend their findings and metaphors to very different views of history or, more generally, to different models of transformation and stability; and both of them and the interaction between them must be configured general economically. Both Freud and Lamarck must obviously rely in turn on metaphorical models borrowed from other fields—for example, philosophy and especially Hegel. Reverse traffic can therefore be engaged as well, mixing different theories in complex and often intractable ways. Lamarck's theories, we recall, are pre-Hegelian, whereas Darwin's are post-Hegelian and, clearly, in the shadow of Hegel. The situation is analogous to the case of physics and thermodynamics in Nietzsche and Bataille, for example; and by way of metaphors and as "evidence," physics and thermodynamics play their role in Freud as well. Lamarck's ideas can serve Freud to figure a continuity and totalization of history, deferring required effects "over large historical intervals." They can serve Nietzsche to introduce more difference, more transformation, more history, thus undermining totalization, specifically against Schopenhauer and, in the course of the same argument—the same short session, as it were—against Hegel. This double, or rather multifrontal, attack proceeds, furthermore, via Wagner,

who “allowed himself to be led astray by Hegel” (*The Gay Science*, 153; KSA 3:455). Nietzsche’s roads connect—multi-complementarize—many things and lead in many directions, often at once. As Deleuze suggests:

Nietzsche criticizes Darwin for interpreting evolution and chance within evolution in an entirely reactive way. He admires Lamarck because Lamarck foretold the existence of a truly active *plastic force*, primary in relation to adaptations: a force of *metamorphosis*. For Nietzsche, as for energetics, energy which is capable of *transforming* itself, is called “noble.” The power of *transformation*, the Dionysian power, is the primary definition of activity. But each time we point out the nobility of action and its superiority to reaction in this way we must not forget that reaction also designates a type of force. It is *simply* that reactions cannot be grasped or scientifically understood as forces if they are not related to superior forces—forces of *another type*. The reactive is a primordial quality of force but one which can only be interpreted as such in relation to and on the basis of the active. (*Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 42; *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, 48; emphasis added)

The emphasis on the interpretive—always already derivative—character of force is crucial. Extending and deconstructing the Hegelian play of forces as considered earlier, this emphasis leads to the *differences* “prior” to forces in Deleuze, or Deleuze/Nietzsche, and the general economy of *différance* in Derrida, or Derrida/Nietzsche.

I shall not discuss here Nietzsche’s “*reaction*” to Darwin, which is not rigorous and contains a number of problematic claims. Some of Nietzsche’s criticism, however, is consistent with subsequent developments in the history of Darwinism, particularly along the lines of the difference between “active” and “reactive.” This criticism is even more valid in the case of social Darwinism—a major target in late Nietzsche. Whatever Nietzsche’s biology, however, “the power—the Dionysian power—of transformation” leads to a radical difference of the historical; and from, to use Nietzsche’s terms, the perspectival evaluation of the present analysis, Nietzsche’s is a better history, a better genealogy of morals, than Freud’s, which need not imply, of course, that it is free of problems.

Biology, or science in general, as evidence and metaphor, cannot be discounted either in Nietzsche or in Freud; and critical as Nietzsche was,



his thinking was in turn affected by much that can be subsumed under the name "Darwin," after Darwin and others, including Nietzsche. The same, of course, is the case in Freud. In general, the question of whether a metaphorical model can be separated from scientific evidence, and of whether its *scientific* value should determine its metaphoric usage in other fields, cannot be simply suspended, even though casual decoupling of that type is possible and at times necessary.

As considered earlier, metaphoric traffic constrains these interactions differently—more complementarily and general economically. All scientific hypotheses are metaphoric models of one kind or another, but they have different conditions of operation in different fields. The question of the theoretical value and limits of metaphors determined by "false" scientific theories may itself be seen as an important aspect of the general economy of the historical and of the theoretical.

Freud's problematic—*unsustainable*—totalization of history *depends*, crucially, on Lamarck's *unsustainable* hypothesis; and the problems of Lamarckian theory were widely recognized at the time. Freud senses the problem and discusses the issue in the section of *Moses and Monotheism* entitled "Difficulties" (*The Complete Works*, 23, 92–102). He wants to use his theory of "*archaic heritage*" in order to *support—scientifically—*the Lamarckian view. Freud, Harold Bloom says, "stumbled badly in positing a phylogenetically transmitted inheritance as the explanation of the universality of such fantasies [the Primal Scene]" (*A Map of Misreading*, 5).<sup>8</sup> It is interesting that Bloom, who insists on the purely metaphorical significance of Freud's or any paradigm, says nevertheless that "Freud stumbled badly." Why? I do not question, but rather support Bloom's assessment. The point is that scientific evidence may count a great deal, even in using metaphorical models in other fields, although there are of course situations in which scientific evidence for or against a given theory plays no role in its value as a potential source of metaphors. Freud needs Lamarck in order to *sustain* his universal history, in order to become the "*Hegel*" of the unconscious. The latter is an understandable desire, given the contemporary state of historical studies, on the one hand, and the Freudian, or Bloomian, Oedipal anxiety, on the other—the tremendous anxiety of this mighty double shadow of Hegel and Nietzsche, the shadow of history and the shadow of the unconscious. Even Freud's

preference for Lamarck, as against Darwin, is Nietzschean, too—perhaps another debt to Nietzsche that Freud refuses to recognize.<sup>9</sup>

“Darwin” could be reinserted into the metaphoric network of the general economy, particularly if one thinks of “Darwin” *now*, as one would think of “Freud” *now*—via psychoanalysis after Freud, such as in Lacan, psychology, biology, deconstruction, feminism, and numerous other developments. Among these developments one might particularly mention evolutionary models of psychology as in Bateson, biological theories of memory approaching memory through models of history, and related theories.<sup>10</sup> Given the conceptual and metaphorical richness of modern biology and of science in general, metaphoric traffic may be extraordinarily productive. These possibilities are often ignored, underestimated, or repressed, and there are profound, but also superficial, reasons for any of these attitudes. Such, as we have seen, was not the case, however, in Nietzsche, Freud, or Bataille, whether one speaks of biology or other natural sciences. In *Erotism*, Bataille certainly depends, via Freud and otherwise, conceptually and metaphorically, on several biological theories, as Freud does in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* or in the *Project*, or for that matter throughout his text.

In truth, it would be quite naive to think that Darwin is not already—always already—reinserted into the history of general economy. Darwin is a crucial part of the historical and theoretical unconscious of the general economy of history and the unconscious. For Darwin had discovered one of the largest differences, indeed, save modern cosmologies, as yet the largest difference—the difference and *différance* of evolution—to which the question of man, the question “Who are we?” must relate. Darwin’s answer, as it were, would be: “Well, it is a long story.” The *différance* of evolution is thus also inscribed in the difference of history, or life; and as Derrida has in fact suggested (*Of Grammatology*, 131), this *différance* of life may well be a larger “*différance*” than Derrida’s *différance*, if it can still be *différance*.

The question of *différance* and evolution is a complex one. But along with Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, Darwin is certainly one of the greatest proper names to define our epoch. It is, in the shadow of Hegel, the epoch of the historical but also, in the shadow of Nietzsche and Freud, the epoch of the unconscious. Nietzsche does not fail to make this point, directly projecting “Darwin” into Hegel:

Let us take, thirdly, the astonishing stroke of *Hegel*, who struck right through all our logical habits and indulgences when he dared to teach that *species concepts* [*die Artbegriffe*] develop out of each other. With this proposition the minds of Europe were preformed for the last great scientific movement, Darwinism—without Hegel there would have been no Darwin. Is there anything German in this Hegelian innovation that first introduced the decisive concept of “development” into science? (*The Gay Science*, 305- 6; KSA 3:598; translation modified)

The last—German—question, another question mark is, as we have seen, of some interest, too. The question “Who are we, anyway?” is, we recall, also asked in *The Gay Science*. Nietzsche speaks at some point of Altaic languages as being perhaps better for formulating theory (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 27–28; KSA 5:34- 35); these are the languages of Siberia, which, according to Hegel, should be eliminated from World History: truly, “zur Nächstenliebe rathe ich euch nicht: ich rathe euch zur Fernsten-Liebe. Also sprach Zarathustra [love of the neighbor I do not recommend to you; I recommend to you the love of the farthest. Thus spoke Zarathustra]” (*Also sprach Zarathustra*, KSA 4:79; *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 62; translation modified).

### *Nietzsche*

Nietzsche’s own case as a thinker of history is complex, it is true. His case is never simple, in whatever respect. But if Nietzsche’s role as the great thinker of the unconscious is never questioned, his “attitudes towards history” have had at best a mixed history of interpretation. Until very recently, Nietzsche has far more often been seen as an ahistorical than as a historical thinker; and he does offer as radical a critique of historicism and the metaphysics of history as of all other metaphysics. The contention of the present analysis is that Nietzsche’s text points toward the *fundamental necessity of historical*, even radically historical thinking—*whenever necessary*. Nietzsche, thus, can be seen as the thinker, for the first time, of—together—the radical unconscious and radical historicity; of their irreducible complementarity.

The passage on Hegel and Darwin cited a bit earlier clearly illustrates this point. On the one hand, the “historical” dimension of Hegel’s thought is deeply understood and advocated, even praised. On the other, throughout his writing, Nietzsche offers a powerful critique of Hegel.

Darwin, while a different and more complex case, can still be seen along these lines. Many passages from Nietzsche's later texts could be offered to support this point on Hegel in both directions, critical and positive, beginning with *Human, All Too Human*. The main part of the book opens with comments on metaphysical philosophy and historical philosophy, or indeed against metaphysical philosophy and advancing *historical* philosophy [die historische Philosophie] as an antimetaphysical, even deconstructive philosophy, which, in addition, "can no longer be separated from natural science, the youngest of all philosophical methods." The title of the section is an elegant usage of a chemical metaphor—"Chemistry of concepts and sensations [Chemie der Begriffe und Empfindungen]" (*Human, All Too Human*, 12; KSA 2:23).

Elsewhere, Nietzsche writes on philosophers' problems—in this very order: first history—"Hegel"—then physiology—"Darwin": "What do philosophers lack? (a) an historical sense, (b) knowledge of physiology, (c) a goal in the future—A critique to formulate without any irony or moral condemnation" (*The Will to Power*, no. 408, p. 220; KSA 11:176–77; translation modified).<sup>11</sup> At the same time, "Hegel," along with "Darwinists," will be criticized for the *metaphysical* and—as always in Nietzsche—moral, as opposed to the *critical*, grounding of history and becoming. "Fundamental insight [Grundeinsicht]: Kant as well as Hegel and Schopenhauer—the skeptical-epochistic attitude, as well as the historicizing attitude, as well as the pessimistic attitude—have a *moral* origin [Ursprung]. I saw no one who had ventured a critique of moral value feelings: and I soon turned my back on the meager attempts made to arrive at a description of the origin of these feelings (as by the English and German Darwinists)" (*The Will to Power*, no. 410, p. 221; KSA 12:144; translation modified; emphasis added).

"Hegel" and Hegelianism—"historicizing"—become "*fundamental* insight," a part of the general continuum that must be *deconstructed*. One must in fact wrest the great critical potential of the Hegelian "grandiose project" from its metaphysical reappropriations—philosophical, moral, and vulgarly political or theological, which are always, by definition, vulgar for Nietzsche:

The meaning of German philosophy (Hegel): to evolve a pantheism in which evil, error, and suffering are not felt as argument against divinity.

This grandiose undertaking [Initiative] has been misused by existing powers (state, etc.), as if it sanctioned the rationality of whoever happened to be ruling.

[Die Bedeutung der deutschen Philosophie (Hegel): einen Pantheismus auszudenken, bei dem das Böse, der Irrthum und das Leid nicht als Argumente gegen Göttlichkeit empfunden werden. Diese grandiose Initiative ist mißbraucht worden von den vorhandenen Mächten (Staat usw.), als sei damit die Vernünftigkeit des gerade Herrschenden sanktionirt.] (*The Will to Power*, no. 416, p. 223; KSA 12:113; translation modified)

That is an extraordinarily perceptive and profound insight into Hegel, who could, in this sense, be said to betray his own project; and this comment *betrays* perhaps more knowledge of Hegel than is often granted to Nietzsche, even by Bataille.<sup>12</sup>

Nietzsche, “the philosopher with a hammer,” powerfully makes the general point—the importance “of the historical sense”—in the chapter “‘Reason’ in Philosophy” in *Twilight of the Idols, or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer*. Nietzsche drives the final nails into the coffin of philosophy, the coffin containing the “concepts-mummies,” as if in order to bury these “mummies” once and for all. Yet we also need them for many an anatomy in order to understand their “life” and history and our life and history:

You ask me which of the philosophers’ traits are really idiosyncracies? For example, *their lack of historical sense*, their hatred of the very idea of becoming, their Egypticism. They think that they show their *respect* for a subject when they *de-historicize* it, *sub specie aeterni*—when they turn it into a mummy. All that philosophers have handled for thousands of years have been concept-mummies; nothing real escaped their grasp alive. When these honorable idolators of concepts worship something, they kill it and stuff it; they threaten the life of everything they worship. Death, change, old age, as well as procreation and growth, are to their minds objections—even refutations. Whatever has being does not become; whatever becomes does not have being. (*Portable Nietzsche*, 479–80; *Götzen-Dämmerung*, KSA 6:74; emphasis added)

Nietzsche’s “example”—“the lack of *historical sense*”—is not accidental. Nor is the connection between becoming or history and the senses.

"Except[ing] . . . with the highest respect . . . the name of *Heraclitus*," Nietzsche immediately relates "becoming" and "the testimony of the senses" (*Portable Nietzsche*, 480; KSA 6:74). The example thus reflects Nietzsche's complex attitude toward Hegel and history. The chapter "'Reason' in Philosophy" itself leads to "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error," which, notwithstanding its parodies and style, indeed given its parodies and style, is far from lacking in "historical sense." On the contrary, it may have more and better historical sense than all philosophy hitherto—Hegel included.

Nietzsche's later texts would establish his position as at once fundamentally *critical*, or *deconstructive*, and, no less fundamentally, *historical*. Nietzsche's text or style remains plural. It never amounts to a single or simple position on anything, although Nietzsche does take strong "positions," in fact taking them more strongly than Derrida, for example, does and urges us to do as a general theoretical practice. One encounters in Nietzsche's text a great complexity of relationships between presence, whether being-presence or becoming-presence, and a radical general economic efficacy, dislocating presence and leading to the—general economic—unconscious, becoming, and history. Hence the complexity of Nietzsche's concepts of and positions on history. *On the Genealogy of Morals* remains the single most important and by far the most influential text of Nietzsche as a thinker and a *writer* of history, in his radically plural style of writing, "no longer subordinate to the logos and to truth." Nietzsche fundamentally relates the question of history-genealogy to the question of memory, repression, the unconscious and, then, to textuality and "perspectivism," thus establishing a proximity to textuality in the deconstructive sense. But one can easily trace general economic features throughout Nietzsche, particularly in his later works.

Nietzsche's is a complex and often difficult text. But why should it be simple in the first place? Are Nietzsche's questions ever simple? In the absence of an unconditionally logical structure to all logic, Nietzsche remains as logical as one can be, far more logical and analytically precise than most of his critics. These cannot be unconditional claims, of course; and they suggest, once again, the complexity of the question of logic or theoretical consistency. The "logic" at stake and in play here must itself be complex and plural. Such are our theoretical constraints. Nietzsche has written powerfully and many times on this "logic" and on the "psy-

chology" of this style, theoretical and perhaps practical and political—"grand politics" [die große Politik]. Joyful as it may be, this wisdom, this science—*die fröhliche Wissenschaft*—cannot be simple.

Nietzsche does not, simply or unconditionally, dismiss simplicity either. In a plural or complementary text, simplicity, under certain circumstances, may be unavoidable for a complex text, although the overall balance between simple and complex will be different in different texts of that type. There is the profound complexity of Nietzsche's logic and the complexity of relationships between "logics," and there are still many more "logics" at stake and in play in Nietzsche's "logic" and *affirmative style*.

This economy of style is operative both within any given text, which will often deliberately be plural, and between different texts, which may be used complementarily. Of course, one must remain attentive to Nietzsche's development and transformations. Nietzsche himself is remarkably sensitive in this respect, for example in *Ecce Homo*, and he, or rather his *text*, remains perhaps the best critic of Nietzsche. If there is anything that characterizes the heterogeneous conglomerate of Nietzsche's text—the early works as much as the later ones—it is the insistence on becoming. This insistence thus opens the question of history, despite, or because of, the complexity of different economies of transformations and their interrelations—the complexity of history. In this respect, Nietzsche, "the third Heraclitean," would follow Hegel, "the second Heraclitean." But Nietzsche can only follow Hegel against Hegel. Nietzsche's relation to Hölderlin—"the first Heraclitean" of Heidegger's triad—is a more complex matter.

These are early texts, however, most notably "The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life" [Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben] of the *Untimely Meditations*, that have been used to claim Nietzsche's ahistoricism or antihistoricism. But how ahistorical is the early Nietzsche? How ahistorical can he be? It is far more sensible to see the early Nietzsche, specifically in "The Uses and Disadvantages of History," as *antihistoricist* rather than ahistorical, to see him as a *historical* antihistoricist Nietzsche.

The very title reveals ambivalence. The Foreword opens with "we need history" repeated *twice* in the first paragraph. "We need history, certainly," and certainly "for different reasons" (*Untimely Meditations*, 59;

KSA 1:245). But everything in Nietzsche is always for different reasons—"reasons other than hitherto [aus anderen Gründen, als bisher]" (*Daybreak*, 60; KSA 3:90). The textual drift of the essay may be even seen as toward history: as the essay develops, history is brought into the foreground more and more, even though at times within an insufficiently nuanced or complementarized opposition of knowledge and action—*theoria* and *praxis*. Even the first part of the essay is fairly ambivalent, with its undeniable insistence on a certain necessary *forgetting* of history and *forgetting*—*active forgetting*—in general. In fact, it is richly stratified in respect to "disadvantages," on the one hand, and "uses" of history on the other, pointing to a complex and precarious theoretical and rhetorical balance in the essay. The point could be further nuanced by exploring the functioning of the term "Historie," which Nietzsche appears to oppose rhetorically to Hegel's "Geschichte"; and such an analysis would confirm the conclusions of the present discussion. Certainly, here or elsewhere in his writing, Nietzsche never denies the significance of the historical economy of whatever he considers, however much he questions the uses and disadvantages of historical thinking or representation for "life." He would deny, of course, an *absolute* significance, or an absolute insignificance, of anything.

The argument of the essay suggests the necessary or desirable balance of being, or presence, and becoming in the individual memory or psyche and collective existence and historico-political formations. "Thus: it is possible to live *almost* without memory [Erinnerung], and to live happily moreover, as the animal demonstrates; but it is altogether impossible to *live* at all without forgetting [Vergessen]. Or, to express my theme even more simply: *there is a DEGREE [GRAD] of sleeplessness, of rumination, of the historical sense, which is harmful and ultimately fatal to the living thing, whether this living thing be a man or a people or a culture*" (*Untimely Meditation*, 62; KSA 1:250; emphasis added).

This is a brilliant insight, especially for 1874; and it anticipates later more subtle and powerful conceptions, particularly in the *Genealogy*. The two works can be seen as paradigmatic of differences and continuities in the attitudes toward history in the early and late Nietzsche. 'Almost' is an important qualifier, and 'degree' is perhaps the best and the wisest word to use here. Even if—and assuming that such is the case—"expressed simply," things are, as always, hardly simple. The balance



between “memory” and “forgetting”—between their relative “almost” and “at all”—must in the end be seen as less unequivocal and more differentially distributed than Nietzsche suggests here. Under some conditions, the balance may favor memory; under others, there may be a preponderance of forgetting. By contrast, “ultimately fatal,” like all “ultimates,” is quite out of place, even though the fate of “a man, a people, or a culture” can be and in the end—in the long, perhaps very long run—*ultimately must be fatal*.

Nietzsche is a great master of the fable, and his customary introductory fable about “happy,” “forgetful” animals is very elegant and witty: “A human being may well ask an animal: ‘Why do you not speak to me of your happiness but only stand and gaze at me?’ The animal would like to answer, and say: ‘The reason is I always forget what I was going to say’—but then he forgot this answer too, and stayed silent: so that the human being was left wondering” (*Untimely Meditations*, 60–61; KSA 1:249).

The major theme of *On the Genealogy of Morals* is introduced by a fable, too:

That lambs dislike great birds of prey does not seem strange: only it gives no ground for reproaching these birds of prey for bearing off little lambs. And if the lambs say among themselves: “these birds of prey are evil; and whoever is least like a bird of prey, but rather its opposite, a lamb—would he be not good?” there is no reason to find fault with this institution of the ideal [*so ist an dieser Aufrichtung eines Ideals nichts auszusetzen*], except perhaps that the birds of prey might view it a little ironically and say: “*we* don’t dislike them at all, these good little lambs; we even love them: nothing is more tasty than a tender lamb.” (*Genealogy*, 44–45; KSA 5:278–79)

This is a far more powerful fable with many subtle ironies and allusions to much in the history of morals and metaphysics, including the metaphysics of morals or morality of metaphysics. “This institution of the ideal” is a brilliant turn of phrase to put to work here. The deliberate post-Darwinian and, for Nietzsche, anti-Darwinian spin of this passage should not be missed either. The fable, it is true, may seem and may be disturbing enough; and such implications should not be ignored. One must also be attentive, however, to the subtlety of Nietzsche’s thought

here and his analysis in the work, as well as to his *actual* sympathies and condemnations.

Most crucial at the moment is that it is a *historical*, an irreducibly historical fable, as opposed to the one set against memory and against history in the earlier essay. Its situation is fundamentally predicated upon memory and history. It is, for example, on the one hand, the memory of the pain and harm inflicted upon "the unhappy animal" by a more powerful one, and, on the other, the memory of the birds of prey—the memory of pleasure—which conditions their "happiness." It is not that forgetting plays no role here. As in the earlier essay, it is *memory* and *history*—the inability to forget—that make the lambs unhappy. The subtle complexity and the richness of the interaction between many a memory and many a forgetting transpire here. This economy is then thematically developed in the great opening on the "active forgetfulness" of the second essay, and with great care and precision, approaching the problem from all sides, throughout the book. Nietzsche's sense of "civilization and its discontents" is as acute as ever. Freud's history of culture owes much to this sense, which Freud possesses with equal acuteness.

Still, one would not want to diminish the strength and complexity of Nietzsche's earlier work, including its power and potential as a critique of historicism and specifically of Hegel, whom Nietzsche considers in the essay. I insist on Nietzsche's attention to "degree" in the distribution of forgetting of history or being un-historical and remembering history or being historical because this stipulation would increase both the constructive and the deconstructive potential, which are inextricably interrelated, of this early essay. While, not as powerful as *On the Genealogy of Morals*, the essay is extraordinary. It should be pointed out, in addition, that Nietzsche carefully establishes the *interactive* difference, or complementarity, between historical or unhistorical practices—the "life"—of "a man, a people, or a culture"—and the *historical* analysis of such a life. In the end, since any historical investigation, practical or theoretical, contributes to the historical or unhistorical character of culture, both must merge in the "history" of "modern culture," to which Nietzsche himself belongs.

De Man correctly sees the whole configuration of "modernity" thus emerging as "the problem of modernity" and "literary modernity" in his influential reading of Nietzsche, "Literary History and Literary Modernity" (*Blindness and Insight*). It is, however, still a question of Greek

culture as well—the tragic, Dionysian age of the Greeks, its philosophy, its history, its historical and unhistorical practices. Or, as always for Nietzsche, but quite differently from Heidegger, it is the question of both the modern and the Greek at once. The elaborations and the interplay of the Apollinian and the Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy* bear fundamentally on the issues in this nearly contemporary essay, as well as the earlier lectures, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*.

Nietzsche's approach to the question of relationships among theory, history, and life is at once, complementarily, Hegelian and anti-Hegelian. It is, on the one hand, a Hegelian unity of theory and history, translated or at least shifted towards complementarity, and, on the other, an unhistorical practice, an anti-Hegelian rupture between knowledge and practice as the forgetting of knowledge.

It would follow that this configuration of life and history, or theory, would be multiply heterogeneous and multiply interactive, multiply complementary, although Nietzsche does not quite draw these conclusions here—and his not doing so should not be discounted. This economy of life would, alongside complementarities, be permeated by “primary inhibitions” and “inhibitions of the primary,” paradoxes, double-binds, undecidables, and aporias. By suggesting a different economy of the historical, Nietzsche's analysis points out that the “logic” of these relationships is perhaps more logical than in Hegel. “Schizophrenia” and the double bind of the unconscious are also more “logical.” The task, as Nietzsche says, is “to determine the *degree* [*Grad*], and therewith *boundary* [*Grenze*], in which the past has to be forgotten” (*Untimely Meditations*, 62; KSA 1:251; emphasis added). A comprehension of the limits of both the theory and practice of metaphysics is a task of extraordinary difficulty—the task that Nietzsche has set himself and that he accomplishes to an unprecedented degree. Nietzsche elaborates as follows:

To determine this degree, and therewith the boundary at which the past has to be forgotten if it is not to become the gravedigger of the present, one would have to know exactly how great the *plastic power* [*plastische Kraft*] of a man, a people, a culture is: I mean by plastic power the capacity to develop out of oneself in one's own way, to transform and incorporate into oneself what is past and foreign, to heal wounds, to replace what has been lost, to recreate broken moulds. There are people

who possess so little of this power that they can perish from a single experience, from a single painful event, often and especially from a single subtle piece of injustice, like a man bleeding to death from a scratch; on the other hand, there are those who are so little affected by the worst and most dreadful disasters, and even by their own wicked acts, that they are able to feel tolerably well and be in possession of a kind of clear conscience even in the midst of them or at any rate very soon afterwards. The stronger the innermost roots of a man's nature, the more readily will he be able to assimilate and appropriate the thing of the past; and the most powerful and tremendous nature would be characterized by the fact that it would know no boundary at all at which the historical sense began to overwhelm it; it would draw to itself and incorporate into itself all the past, its own and that most foreign to it, and as it were transform it into blood. That which such a nature cannot subdue it knows how to forget; it no longer exists, the horizon is rounded and closed, and there is nothing left to suggest there are people, passions, teachings, goals lying beyond it. And this is a universal law: a living thing can be healthy, strong and fruitful only when bounded by a horizon; if it is incapable of drawing a horizon around itself, and at the same time too self-centered to enclose its own view within that of another, it will pine away slowly or hasten to its timely end. Cheerfulness, the good conscience, the joyful deed, confidence in the future—all of them depend, in the case of the individual as of a nation, on the existence of a line dividing the bright and discernible from the unilluminable and dark; on one's being just as able to forget at the right time as to remember at the right time; on the possession of a powerful instinct for sensing when it is necessary to feel historically and when unhistorically. This, precisely, is the proposition the reader is invited to meditate upon: *the unhistorical and the historical are necessary in equal measure for the health of an individual, of a people and of a culture.* (*Untimely Meditations*, 62–63; KSA 1:251–52; Nietzsche's emphasis)

Much of the later Nietzsche is anticipated here and in particular the economy of forgetting in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and much of things to come for about a century after him. While, let me note, Nietzsche's *Kraft* may well need to be translated as "power" in this context, the term *Kraft* and notion of plastic force [*die plastische Kraft*] suggest inter-

esting (anti-)Hegelian connections along the lines of the play of forces considered earlier. "Die plastische Kraft" must in fact be a play of forces—a plastic, flexible capacity of forces and power—*Macht*.

Nietzsche's psychological analysis in the passage is exquisite. Freud could not have done better, although he would perhaps establish different priorities, shifted toward illness and healing by reconciliation, by learning how to live with illness. Freud thus would demand more memory than forgetting—to a degree, it is true, but not a discountable and perhaps important degree. Freud's text, like Nietzsche's, is complex in this and every respect. Both describe healthy and sick psychologies, and there may be a greater kinship than it might initially appear between their respective views of the constitution of the healthy individual. Their assessments, interests, and emphases, however, would be different: hence they have *different priorities*. Nietzsche, I think, would not have much sympathy for the enterprise and the institution of psychoanalysis. To complicate the issue further, there is the question of the psychology of the analyst, and the fact that Nietzsche and Freud are themselves complex and difficult cases.

Nietzsche's insistence on and sympathy for strength are pronounced. It may in fact be possible to have enough strength to *remember* and still to fulfill Nietzschean conditions, for one needs to "know how to forget" only what one "cannot subdue." One might possess enough "plastic power" to live and even celebrate life under the conditions of knowledge, even the most tragic knowledge. This state would be close to the conception of strength and of *the tragic* developed in the later Nietzsche.<sup>13</sup> To incorporate the past and history, or knowledge, is always to subdue it in one way or another.

Such a conception would, it follows from the preceding analysis, be close enough to Hegel's dream of knowledge at the ultimate, absolute level—in Absolute Knowledge; and it would offer an interesting perspective on the enormous power of Absolute Knowledge. For Nietzsche, this power would not be plastic enough—too much memory, consciousness, self-consciousness. This power in Hegel is also transferred, to a degree, to the human collectivity—the State, although, as we have seen and as Nietzsche himself, in a later comment, warns us, one must be extremely careful concerning this degree and the limits of Hegel's claims in this respect. The ideal that Nietzsche describes in his essay appears to have a

relation of both proximity to and difference from Hegel's economy of the State, particularly as developed in *The Philosophy of Right*, but more difference—the radical difference or *différance* of the unconscious—than proximity. One vision is based on (self-)consciousness and memory—for *Geist* and Absolute Knowledge, memory *without* the unconscious—the other on the unconscious and forgetting, deconstructing, even destroying the Hegelian ideal.

I use “the unconscious” here in the expanded, general economic sense at issue in the present study. Nietzsche's view of forgetting incorporates consciousness as well, although it seems difficult to be able to forget consciously. Rather, consciousness must be seen in Nietzsche and in Freud as borrowing the resources of the unconscious when it needs, in its protective function, to forget, to repress, to limit, to close the horizon. Such is its “plastic power” here and in the *Genealogy*: “active forgetfulness.” A fully—absolutely—conscious forgetting would amount to Hegelian Absolute Knowledge, knowledge that always makes a fully conscious choice. At this point, Nietzsche only intimates these ideas, however powerfully. The unhistorical ideal of man and culture based on forgetting—the ideal of “youth”—developed later in the essay becomes problematic, in contrast to his later ideas, and may be seen in part as an uncritical reversal of Hegel. What is set in operation in the essay, however, has great “plastic power” for theoretical development and the incorporation of more critical conceptions of the historical, or of the unhistorical. The question of power is crucial, anticipating the will to power, specifically the will to power as art, in the later Nietzsche.<sup>14</sup>

Nothing, however, is ever free from the unconscious in Nietzsche, thus making “Hegel” impossible. However powerful and deep and however enormous the distance that it can and must penetrate and encompass, knowledge in Nietzsche, particularly “tragic knowledge,” can never be complete knowledge, certainly not Absolute Knowledge. It can never be a knowledge without the unconscious, without forgetting. In “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” “the *universal* law” is “drawing a horizon,” perhaps more “*youthfully*,” reducing the tragic. This law could also imply a certain finitude as against Hegelian historical infinitism. In later works, “tragic knowledge” and what might be called a “tragic historical sense” will involve *knowledge* at multiple levels of memory and forgetting. One must, for example, remember—have an awareness

or knowledge of—the impossibility of full knowledge or of full memory—even if one must also at times be able to forget it at certain points.

Nietzsche's early intimations on history and on the unconscious, then, already suggest the complexity of complementarities, boundaries, degrees, limits of memory and forgetting, the conscious and the unconscious, the historical and the unhistorical. Most importantly in the present context, these insights point toward the possibility and indeed the necessity of a conception of history that is *localized*, rather than linearly or uniquely dependent on the global history of "a man, a people, or a culture." The flexibility of what Nietzsche sees as "plastic power," the power of forgetting, would condition, psychologically and socially, and thus politically, a more differential and unconscious conception of historicity. From this perspective, one can easily see the importance of the—*historical*—analysis of the unhistorical and "new" cultures and potential models or programs for such cultures, which Nietzsche tries to conceive of in the essay. There can, of course, be no such thing as an unhistorical or absolutely new culture any more than a truly Hegelian culture, as Nietzsche understands and must acknowledge as the essay progresses. The issue is rather the historical practices and ensuing theoretical models that undermine Hegelian claims for "a man, a people, or a culture." These models would have to be considered in relation to the model of presence that grounds the metaphysical, and specifically Hegelian, concepts of time and history as considered earlier.

Such would be the deepest and most important implications of Nietzsche's early attack on history and, by implication, Hegel. The different historicity demanded by Nietzsche would in fact have to be *more historical* than Hegel's; or rather, since it incorporates the *past*, consciously as well as unconsciously, it would have to be more historical along some "historical" lines and dimensions, and less historical along other "lines." Nietzsche's is a much more unconscious historicity—a historicity of the unconscious—and there can be no general economy of history or of anything without it; and some of its "lines" may in their forgetfulness, or memory, not be historical at all.

These elaborations are again an early Nietzsche; and his conceptions in the essay do not achieve a full measure of the *critical* inscription and comprehension of the historical—or the a-historical—of the later works.

As a part of his tripartite division into “*monumental*,” “*antiquarian*,” and “*critical*,” Nietzsche’s own conception of “a *critical* species of history” has an altogether different meaning. Nietzsche, here, must also have in mind Hegel’s tripartite division of history into “original,” “reflective,” and “philosophical” opening the *Philosophy of History*. Nietzsche’s conceptions and the general economy or the contra-Hegelian machinery that they imply are not incompatible with the *critical* potential of the Nietzschean propositions just considered, or *as* just considered. These propositions, however, would necessitate a kind of “logic” or “against-logic” and a *criticism* of the historical and unhistorical that is different from those offered by the essay itself. Some of the theoretically weaker incongruities and metaphysics will be replaced and recomprehended by the more complex and rigorous—and yet more playful—“logic” of Nietzsche’s later works. This logic is thus also a deconstruction of metaphysics, such as the metaphysics of history, that can in fact be applied to some of Nietzsche’s early conceptions in this essay and elsewhere.

The metaphysical appurtenance of earlier works may also have facilitated metaphysical reappropriations of Nietzsche and the reinserting of Nietzsche’s texts in the history of metaphysics, specifically by Heidegger. Heidegger thus writes in the process of offering his own conception of historicity or historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*] of *Dasein*:

The possibility that history [or historiography: *Historie*] in general can either be “useful” for life or disadvantageous to it, is grounded on the fact that life is historical in the root of its Being, and that therefore, as factually existing, one has in each case made one’s decision for authentic [*eigentlich*] or inauthentic [*uneigentlich*] historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*]. Nietzsche recognized what was essential as to the “uses and disadvantages of history for life” in the second of his “untimely meditations” (1874) and said it unequivocally and penetratingly. He distinguishes three kinds of history—the monumental, the antiquarian, and the critical—without explicitly pointing out the necessity of this triad or the ground of its unity. *The threefold character of history* [*Historie*] is *adumbrated in the historicity* [*Geschichtlichkeit*] of *Dasein*. At the same time, authentic historicity must be the sufficiently concrete unity of these three possibilities. Nietzsche’s division is not accidental. The beginning of his “study” allows us to suppose that he understood more than he has made



known to us. (*Being and Time*, 448; *Sein und Zeit*, Gesamtausgabe II:523; translation modified)

Perhaps Nietzsche indeed “understood more than he has made known to us,” although I am inclined to think that Nietzsche “has made known to us” about as much as he “understood” at this point. Nietzsche’s more profound understanding came later, although it may be related to the propositions appearing in “the beginning of his ‘study.’” Nietzsche’s “understanding” there, let alone in later works, is, however, very different from Heidegger’s conception of the “historicity”—the “*authentic historicity*” of *Dasein*—or, in general, the metaphysics of the *authentic, proper, presence* permeating Heidegger’s text, which “does not dislocate [*n’ébranlerait pas*], on the contrary reinstates, an instance of the logos and the truth of Being” (*Of Grammatology*, 20; *De la grammatologie*, 33; translation modified).

Based largely on *forgetting*, Nietzsche’s own “instance of metaphysics” in this early essay would be quite different from, even antithetical to, Heidegger. Heidegger displaces Nietzsche’s “monumental history,” also fundamentally based on forgetting, into the “‘monumental’ historicity of *Dasein*”: “*Dasein* exists authentically [*eigentlich*] as *futural* in resolutely disclosing [*im entschlossenen Erschließen*] a possibility which it has chosen. Coming back resolutely to itself, it is, by repetition, open for the ‘monumental’ possibilities of human existence. The history [*Historie*] which arises from such a historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*] is ‘monumental’” (*Being and Time*, 448; *Sein und Zeit*, 523; translation modified; emphasis added). Such a displacement is understandable and indeed inevitable in Heidegger, for a variety of reasons, perhaps most importantly, given the necessity of positioning Nietzsche *with* Hegel, and making Nietzsche’s economy of history into an “authentic,” *proper*, authentic history of philosophy as the concealment-disclosure, in *Dasein*, of Being and its truth. This displacement is also ingenious, for by correctly relating Nietzsche’s “monumental history” to the “futural,” Heidegger can see it as a potential disclosure of the concealed—and thus almost, but not quite, forgotten—*Dasein*. I doubt deeply that Nietzsche would see this economy as *monumental* for human existence, either in the essay at issue or in his later texts and that Nietzsche, even the early Nietzsche, would have accepted these propositions of Heidegger’s.

To be more precise, Heidegger speaks here of the perhaps different possibilities "which Dasein has chosen"; in the end, however, given that *authentic* [*eigentlich*] history is the disclosure of authentic historicity, it will not affect the present argument. For the question is how diverse a play of differences Heidegger would allow; and while Heidegger's terms, propositions, and conceptual and textual chains require rigorous adherence to their specificity, they always inscribe the *controlled* play as considered earlier. This play, being always controlled or bound, conforms to the restricted economy of differences and transformations.

Again, much in Nietzsche's early essay remains ambivalent and problematic and in need of further analysis. My concern at the moment is not the nuances of a possible argument against Heidegger, but, first, to show Nietzsche as a historical thinker; Heidegger, too, would maintain this point, although he would ascribe to Nietzsche a very un-Nietzschean economy of historicity. Second, more importantly, my goal is to trace the significance of the unconscious and a more radical historicity and, by the same token, a more radical ahistoricity or antihistoricity emerging in Nietzsche's later texts. There, I think, one finds much to support my major point concerning Nietzsche's overwhelming significance as the thinker of history and, complementarily, the unconscious.

It is in this context that the greatest significance of "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life" belongs. The essay exemplifies both the problems and the strengths of the early Nietzsche. The problems of the essay must be read against "strong" propositions in a chain in which the repression of the historical is reinscribed through an interaction and an inhibition that demand a different economy of "history."

In truth, the more rigorous the analysis of Heidegger, the more pronounced and fundamental the difference between him and Nietzsche. Derrida is correct in saying that, at least with respect to certain questions—the very questions that are at issue here—"the virulence of Nietzsche's thought could not be more completely misunderstood" (*Of Grammatology*, 19; *De la grammatologie*, 32). One must give all due credit to the fundamentally historical character of Heidegger's vision and his insistence on history; and the present analysis is not designed to argue against Heidegger's insistence on the historical character of Nietzsche's "thinking." As Derrida does, however, one must put this term "thinking" in quotation marks. Nietzsche's "thinking"—Nietzsche's *style*—is, from

a Nietzschean perspective, not thinking in Heidegger's sense of the "thinking of Being" and its truth. For the same reasons, we need a very different historicity—neither "authentic" nor "fundamental" nor proper or properly "historical"; and it is not always "historical," either. A different law of the historical, a different law of becoming, a different law of the law, a different difference emerge from Nietzsche's text.

### The Irreducible Effects of Deferral

The goal of this section is to suggest major technical and metaphoric aspects of the complementarity of history and the unconscious that emerged in the preceding analysis by considering the metaphors generated by Freud's theory of memory and psychological processes in general and their extension in Derrida. There are many reasons for pursuing this approach. Some of them are relatively obvious, others follow from the preceding analysis, and still others will become apparent as the discussion proceeds. In addition, the general economy and the complementarity of history and the unconscious at issue fundamentally relate to what has been marginalized and repressed by classical historicism and philosophy in general as the restricted economy. It is, therefore, logical to begin with the very force and mechanism of repression, which occupies so prominent a place in Freud's theory and to the understanding and *analysis* of which Freud's contribution was so enormous. "Repression" as a concept has itself been the subject of a prolonged theoretical repression: it was itself repressed in the history of many a theory, and specifically theories of history. It has dwelled in the historical unconscious of theory and returned in its text, as all repressed things do, often with a vengeance.

Along with other repressions invading and shaping the text of philosophy, an analysis of the repression of repression is a crucial part of many critical or deconstructive projects, particularly in Derrida. Deconstruction, naturally, must subject to a rigorous critical scrutiny the very concept of repression—a complex and enigmatic idea, pursued by Derrida's analysis from "Freud and the Scene of Writing" to *The Post Card*.<sup>15</sup> "The intervention of Repression [in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*] remains very enigmatic [L'intervention du Refoulement reste très énigmatique]" Derrida says (*The Post Card*, 287; *La Carte postale*, 307). Maybe it always is. These are great enigmas: the enigma—the Freudian enigma—of repression and the enigma—the Hegelian enigma—of consciousness,

which, however, Freud invokes as an enigma as well. Nietzsche, too, relates consciousness and repression as “active forgetfulness” in the *Genealogy*; but such interactions demand a general economy and thus the economy of mutual inhibition and complementarization, such as that of consciousness and the unconscious, or history and the unconscious.

Freud’s metaphors can be “transferred” so as to support and enrich a refiguration of history and the *historicity* of history as by means of general economy. This transfer must itself conform to a general economy as opposed to Hegelian relations considered as transfers between individual and collective—*historical*—consciousness. The term ‘transfer’ is in turn an enigmatic and bottomless metaphor—a catachresis; in psychoanalysis it is, as notion and procedure, part of the enigmas of repression and consciousness, both through *transference* and otherwise. The term ‘transfer’ must be used and *transferred* with considerable caution, even if already in quotation marks or under erasure. As follows from the preceding analysis, the very possibility of transferring the individual to the collective and historical becomes radically problematized, in opposition to Hegel and to some extent to Freud. The textual movements of Hegel’s own project—its very *logic*—suggest the radical complexity of such transfer, the complexity of the unconscious that Hegel thinks or dreams of having mastered, even if only by way of *Geist*.

The very concept or metaphor or, better, catachresis of metaphor, becomes problematized in the process since, as Derrida points out in “White Mythology,” to begin with, it reciprocally involves the metaphor or catachresis of “transfer.” That reciprocity need not imply that such transfers are impossible; within their refigured limits, they are necessary. The notion of metaphor has played a crucial role in recent theoretical developments, in part owing to the impact of deconstruction. Outside deconstruction, too, the significance of metaphor as a theoretical instrument and of the question of metaphor as a theoretical problem have been prominent in recent history, from Nietzsche on, or—given that no history has a beginning any more than an end—ever since Aristotle, who was perhaps first to define metaphor.<sup>16</sup>

Characterizing Freud’s initial “project for scientific psychology” as a “neurological fable,” and engaging in passing a complementary model of history as an economy of continuities and ruptures, Derrida writes in

*Writing and Difference*: “Whatever may be thought of the continuities and ruptures to come, this hypothesis is remarkable as soon as it is considered as a metaphorical model and *not* as a neurological description” (*Writing and Difference*, 200; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 298). Freud’s model, particularly in 1895, when it was introduced, was remarkable in many other ways as well. Its influence has extended to, on the one hand, medical or experimental psychology, physiology, and neurobiology, and on the other, to the social and human sciences, psychoanalysis, philosophy, and literary studies—indeed serving in these areas more as a metaphorical model.

Given how we view things at the moment, there are only metaphorical models, fictions, or fables. The question, as we have seen, is rather what specific layers of metaphoricity are engaged in a given field and how they are engaged. One must again speak of the theoretical and textual possibilities of Freud’s model—what we can and what we cannot say, in part given what we *can* say. Once one wants to speak about memory or history as a certain difference, certain things become prohibited as the constraints of the general economy impose themselves. The constraints, or “logic,” thus emerging would operate mostly outside fields like neurology, where neurological descriptions function “as such,” that is, where the metaphoricity at issue loses its significance, however provisionally. It will never be absolutely or unconditionally “outside” such fields, however, and the power of such constraints to operate *as* constraints would itself emerge in a stratified theoretical ensemble. A full formalization, or metaphorization, might remain an impossible task in any field or form of discourse. This impossibility, however, would not make any less desirable or necessary an analysis of this problem in various fields and through a variety of approaches. In this sense, as I have discussed earlier, the exploration and problematization of the boundaries between fields, such as natural or human science, or literature and science, or the practical and political sphere and the aesthetic sphere—or for that matter, all boundaries—would not entail eliminating these boundaries. Such exploration could even result in the introduction of many new boundaries, within and without. This understanding is crucial to deconstruction and related developments in criticism and theory. To miss or ignore this point—as Jürgen Habermas does, to give perhaps the most prominent example—is

to misconstrue just about everything—at least in the major works in the field.

The hypothesis and metaphorical model at issue are, then, Freud's hypothesis of pathbreaking and trace as temporal deferral, leading to Derrida's interacting and multiplying—*disseminating*—"neither words nor concepts." Freud himself still conceives of this metaphoric conglomerate—"the unconscious"—metaphysically, at least to a degree; and his understanding of history is, as we have seen, even more metaphysical. Freud's discourse is, according to Derrida, uneasily situated between metaphysics and positivism: "In what ways would the Freudian concepts of writing and trace still be threatened by metaphysics and positivism? The complicity of these two menaces within Freud's discourse" (*Writing and Difference*, 198; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 295). Why and to what extent both would constitute a menace is itself a complex question that will no doubt continue to occupy us for a long time to come.

"The unconscious," Freud's greatest discovery, is at the core of the project, as it is in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Lacan before or between Freud and Derrida. "The unconscious" constitutes the fundamental condition of the possibility of these endeavors and perhaps also the condition of their possibilities—the most fundamental consequence and implication of these projects. Freud's text remains crucial—"uncircumventable"—for modern theory.<sup>17</sup> However much one questions the metaphysical appurtenance of Freud's concepts, one must understand the *effects* of the unconscious. There can perhaps be no *theory*—for example, a *theory* of history—without "Freud," without the unconscious, or rather without accounting for the effects leading Freud to the unconscious.

In Freud's theory, beginning with the *Project*, where it receives its initial, more "scientific," inscription, all "perceptions" are seen as delayed—and delayed *as* inscribed, by virtue of being written—by an operation of putting them in a certain reserve [*Vorrat*], crucial to the operation of the [Freudian] unconscious. Perceptions are thus "immediately," that is to say by mediation, deferred and differentiated from "originary" perceptions, in part by the very deferral at issue. Always, or to use Derrida's famous formula, *toujours déjà*, *always already*, channeled through this machinery—at once an assembly and dis-assembly line—of the unconscious, all perceptions become Derrida's traces. However much the fiction of immediacy and presence may or at times must be

retained, everything immediate becomes always already mediated, that is, the immediate must be reinscribed as an effect of the mediated. Everything immediate and everything mediated becomes written in Derrida's sense of writing, where, in view of this erasure of absolute origin, there are no absolutely originary perceptions, "but . . . only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces [Il n'y a, de part en part, que des différences et des traces de traces]" (*Positions*, 26; *Positions*, 38).

It is important to keep in mind that the mediated at issue *is not* the mediated immediate—or the im-mediated mediated—of Hegel's continuum, but the product of the mediation of and by the unconscious in the general economy. As we have seen, the efficacy of all such processes may not conform to any given economy—classical or deconstructed, restricted or general, of mediation, temporality, historicity, delay and deferral, or anything—while demanding all of these as complementary effects within theoretical and interpretive closures.

*On the one hand*, then, "[t]he trace is not only the disappearance of origin—within the discourse that we sustain and according to the path that we follow it means that the origin did not even disappear, that it was never constituted except reciprocally by a nonorigin, the trace, which thus becomes the origin of the origin. From then on, to wrench the concept of the trace from the classical scheme, which would derive it from a presence or from an originary nontrace and which would make of it an empirical mark, one must indeed speak of an originary trace or arche-trace. Yet we know that that concept destroys its name and that, if all begins with the trace, there is above all no originary trace" (*Of Grammatology*, 61; *De la grammatologie*, 90). Accentuating the difference from the classical scheme is crucial. For as we have seen, restricted economies are often the economies of transformations, difference, exteriority, specifically the *phenomenologies* of perception, conceptualization, memory, and history in Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, and, in their shadows, many others.<sup>18</sup>

*On the other hand*, this general economy of trace, as we have seen, leads to a radical questioning of consciousness and self-consciousness and presence, which are irreducibly connected within the metaphysics of presence, including as the metaphysics of history. Therefore, "[i]n order to describe traces, in order to read the traces of 'unconscious' traces (there are no 'conscious' traces), the language of presence and absence, the

metaphysical discourse of phenomenology, is inadequate. (Although the phenomenologist is not the only one to speak this language)" (*Margins*, 21; *Marges*, 21).

Everything thus will be processed, by way of differences and deferrals, through the radically transformational play of the unconscious, thus also demanding the complementarity of all inscriptions. Whatever historicity or transformability one can or must engage would have to be seen as an effect of this efficacious dynamics. But this efficacy cannot be either final, "bottom line," or unique; in fact, it may not be "historical" in any given sense; and by the same token, there can be no general sense of the historical. As efficacy, it may not be historical in any given sense even when the effects at issue can be, or at a given moment are, best figured as historical in one sense or another. "The activity or productivity connoted by the *a* of *différance* refers to the generative movement in the play of differences. The latter are neither fallen from the sky nor inscribed once and for all in a closed system, a static structure that a *synchronic* and taxonomic operation could exhaust. Differences are the effects of transformations, and from this vantage the theme of *différance* is incompatible with the static, synchronic, taxonomic, *ahistoric* motifs in the concept of *structure*" (*Positions*, 27; *Positions*, 39; emphasis added).<sup>19</sup>

That incompatibility will not mean that other "motifs in the concept of structure" will not be utilized by the matrix of general economy. As a result, the complementarity of history and the unconscious may be applied either to what is conventionally seen as psychological processes or to what is conventionally seen as historical processes. Or rather, it must be applied to both at once, mutually complicating, mutually inhibiting, mutually compromising them, making them mutually complicit—in short, requiring precisely that they be complementary. But one will not be able always to speak only in terms of history, or in terms of the unconscious, or again in any single term or containable conglomerate of terms.

By the same token, one must maintain the effects of presence, permanence, repetition, such as, among other things, "protective" or "repressive" forces, refiguring them in a general economy whenever one must differentiate them from their functioning in a precritical text. Or, conversely, one must maintain the effects of "original" transformations, *inflicting*, to use a most pertinent word here, a radical and "permanent,"



lasting change within the system of memory or history—the enduring effects of revolutions. Hence, in setting up his “neurological fable,” Freud must speak first of “originary perceptions,” inflicting permanent changes, or the effects of permanent alteration, within the system of memory. Since these “originary perceptions” still remain always already mediated, an insertion of a continuous interval into any break is always possible, however radical or revolutionary the break. But that possibility does not erase the effects of ruptures or revolutions along other trajectories. An insertion of a continuity may or may not take place. Nor does it erase various long and stable effects produced by such transformations.

Hence it becomes possible to have a taste for things that last or are rare, of which Nietzsche often speaks and which he admires; for “. . . earth and sea’s rich gems . . . April’s first born flowers and all things rare,” as Shakespeare, who said everything, said (*Sonnet XXI*, ll. 6–7), relating the most fleeting and the most lasting. The line begins in fact with “sun and moon”—the sun always permanent and the moon changing. “To impose upon becoming the character of being— . . . the supreme will to power [Dem Werden der Charakter des Seins aufzuprägen— . . . höchste Wille zur Macht]” (*The Will to Power*, no. 617, p. 330; KSA 12:312) may thus also take the form of admiring or—a grand ambition—creating that which *lasts*. Merely to “survive,” while necessary in order to last, may not be good enough. One aims at that which is, or appears long enough as, indestructible, that which is *Being* amidst becoming. These things are possible, although, as Nietzsche and Shakespeare knew, “for other reasons than hitherto.” There is philosophical, such as Hegelian or “Heideggerian” (*Margins*, 27), or theological hope, to support this knowledge or this un-knowledge, or complementarily both. What determines it and makes things last remains for *now* finally undetermined. And that which is determined, is often, even mostly, determined otherwise than philosophy wants or must determine it, philosophy itself is often governed by the ambition of imposing upon becoming the character of Being, by the will to power. General economy is a “science” of many a “rhetoric of temporality” or “transformability” and, it should not be forgotten, of many a general economy. Conversely, one can experience a tremendous sense of loss, reinforced by memory—“presence”—of the “past” remembered as having been present and experienced as no longer present—an economy explored with extraordinary power by both Wordsworth and Proust.

The general economic transformational play will then intervene in the process of memory or history, but it will also comprehend the “unconscious” in the conventional, or conventionally Freudian, sense, whether we speak of the psychological or the historical framework generated by Freud’s metaphorical model. This signals the complications in Freud’s position and the relations between the metaphysical, or positivist, appurtenance and the deconstructive potential of Freud’s text. For Freud also warned “in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, against metaphorizing the unconscious as an original text subsisting alongside the *Umschrift* (transcription)” (“La parole soufflée,” *Writing and Difference*, 192; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 288).

Still more significant is the general understanding of the textuality of the textual and its “strange” supplementary logic emerging in Derrida’s analysis in “Freud and the Scene of Writing” (*Writing and Difference*, 311–12). He considers it further in his analyses of Rousseau and Husserl that complement—*supplement*—the discussion of Freud, and in fact throughout Derrida’s text. The textuality so inscribed—the textuality of the unconscious as a text that has never been present—fundamentally relates writing and temporality, juxtaposing this relation to the model of presence and the continuum, as considered earlier. The unconscious trace and its *différance* produce presence or the *necessary* fiction of presence, while dislocating it, that is, a corresponding general economy dislocates and recomprehends the logic of presence as the efficacy of presence in *terms of presence*—the restricted economy. The strange logic of supplement constrains one to think this efficacy otherwise, affecting all our description or inscription.

But why call this logic “strange”? Rather this logic becomes more logical than the—now strange—logic of consciousness and presence and, as was argued from the outset, it must be in possession of all the logic of classical logic. Once we want and must speak of the possibility of presence, we cannot inscribe its efficacy in terms of presence, even if we cannot fully avoid—“escape”—these terms either. Derrida offers one of his most crucial, defining propositions related, via Bataille and against Hegel, to this—*general*—economy in “*Différance*”: “A certain alterity—to which Freud gives the metaphysical name of the unconscious—is definitively exempt from every process of presentation by means of which we would call upon it to show itself in person” (*Margins*, 20; *Marges*, 21).

Lacan locates a similar defining point when he speaks of “the encounter with the real [réel],” which may also be said to be the encounter with the material: “Where do we meet this real? For what we have in the discovery of psycho-analysis is an encounter, an essential encounter—an appointment to which we are always called with a real that eludes us” (*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, 53; *Seminaire XI*, 53). Lacan’s economy of the real may, in the end, be very close to the general economy and the field of the unconscious at issue at the moment, and the (non)concept itself and surrounding structures and economies, such as the gaze and *objet petit a*, have, as I said, complex proximities to and differences from Derrida’s ideas.<sup>20</sup>

In Derrida, as we recall, “matter,” too, will be, on the one hand, equally insisted upon, and on the other inscribed, again via Bataille and general economy, in the same terms in *Positions* (64), as a “radical alterity”—a loss of one type or another, to one degree or another, possibly a very great loss—inaccessible to and unrecoverable by philosophical oppositions, propositions, or (re)presentations, in short, inaccessible to conscious knowledge. Following Nietzsche, both Bataille and Derrida offer, thus, a “materialist” economy and complementarity of “the unconscious” and “history” as a general economy emerging *against* both Hegel and Marx. Bataille’s brilliant short essay “Materialism” (1929), to which I referred at the outset of this study, is remarkable for its critical assessment of traditional materialism as the ontotheology—idealism—of matter. It is guided by the Nietzschean critique of the philosophical, whether materialist or idealist, need for external authority, on the one hand, and by quantum mechanical theories of matter, on the other. But it also invokes Freud:

Materialism will be seen as a senile idealism [*un idéalisme gâteux*] to the extent that it is not immediately based on psychological or social facts, instead of on artificially isolated physical phenomena. Thus it is from Freud, among others—rather than from long-dead physicists, whose ideas today have no meaning—that a representation of matter must be taken. It is of little importance that the fear of psychological complications (a fear that only bears witness to intellectual weakness) causes timid souls to see in this attitude an aversion or a return to spiritual values. When the word *materialism* is used, it is time to desig-

nate the direct interpretation, *excluding all idealism*, of raw phenomena, and not a system founded on the fragmentary elements of an ideological analysis, elaborated under the sign of religious relations. (*Visions*, 15–16; *Oeuvres complètes* 1:179–80)

The implications of this statement, which Bataille explores throughout his subsequent work, would lead to complex general economic reciprocities and complementarities between materiality and representation or ideology at issue in the present study. Deleuze and Guattari, too, speak of “the molecular unconscious,” although in fact, at least on this occasion more metaphysically than Bataille: “But in reality the unconscious belongs to the realm of physics; the body without organs and its intensities are not metaphors, but matter itself [*la matière elle-même*]” (*Anti-Oedipus*, 283; *L’Anti-Oedipe*, 336). Both Freud and, interestingly, Jung would take a similar position: the “bottom line” of the unconscious is the “body” and therefore finally the *abyss* of matter, in whatever sense of this now-fashionable word ‘abyss’—that of modern physics, for example, or Lacan’s economy of the Real and Derrida’s economy of *différance*. Matter, thus, is also an abyss—a general economic “radical alterity” in relation to philosophy and its closure, or possibly any closure. In this respect Nietzsche’s, Bataille’s, Lacan’s, and Derrida’s ideas, on the one hand, and Bohr’s, on the other, are decisive; both lines of thought, interactively, provide rich metaphors for, but also establish powerful constraints, on a corresponding theory of history and, to a degree, on the practice of historiography—*Geschichte* and *Historie*. Both in its own right, and as extended and radicalized by Derrida’s analysis, and to a degree already by Lacan, Freud’s matrix offers extraordinary possibilities in this respect.

Various psychoanalytic metaphors condition Derrida’s text throughout. Thus, whether one speaks of (re)presentations specifically as philosophical or theoretical accounts or any other configuration of truth, imitation, representation and so on, one of such metaphoric models, persistent in Derrida, is that of the patient under analysis. The patient’s text, which is always *written* in Derrida’s sense, is *presented*, in either sense, to an analyst, whose task is a “recovery” or management of the unconscious record—a record of unconscious traces.

In general economy, of course, a full recovery as final reconstitution of presence is impossible, and the very economy and procedure of recovery

are radically put into question. This deconstruction may be more radical in Derrida, Bataille, and Nietzsche than for Freud, although, as was indicated earlier, Freud is far from broaching any unequivocal claims in this respect. There is, in general, no original presence to be recovered or reconstructed; no original presence to be recovered, or discovered, or to remain un-known in its self-presence, or appearance only to itself. Records of any kind, be they “repetitions” or “origins,” can only be constructed—supplemented. The effects of memory that make things to be constructed *as* reconstructed or recovered, can be—and must be—inscribed.

As we have seen, metaphysical models of production or the becoming of consciousness and knowledge, specifically in Hegel, need not always be confined to the recovery of a content already present, either. Such economies, while still restricted, may be sufficiently transformational. One of the central points or agendas of the present study is to figure, to the extent possible, and to insist on the difference between restricted and general economies as economies of transformations—from human memory to history.

As suggested earlier, it is by history, and in the richest possible historical economy, that memory should perhaps be metaphorized, rather than the other way around, as it has been more customarily from Hegel to Freud—here Freud on history, as opposed to Freud on memory. This point is powerfully intimated by Bateson’s “steps to an *ecology* of mind” and by a number of more recent approaches to the psyche and memory in different fields, as indicated earlier. Further pursuing Freud’s matrix, Derrida writes in *Of Grammatology*:

Since “genetic inscription” and the “short programmatic chains” regulating the behavior of the amoeba or the annelid up to the passage beyond alphabetic writing to the orders of the logos and of a certain *homo sapiens*, the possibility of the *gramm* structures the movement of its history according to rigorously original levels, types, and rhythms. But one cannot think them without the most general concept of the *gramm*. That is irreducible and impregnable. If the expression ventured by Leroi-Gourhan is accepted, one could speak of a “liberation of memory,” of an exteriorization always already begun but always larger than the trace which, beginning from the elementary program of so-called

“instinctive” behavior up to the constitution of electronic card-indexes and reading machines, enlarges *différance* and the possibility of putting in reserve: it at once and in the same movement constitutes and effaces so-called conscious subjectivity, its logos, and its theological attributes. (*Of Grammatology*, 84; *De la grammatologie*, 125–26)

A huge historical (non)chain—the great chain of being made *différance* and writing—is intimated here. But this (non)chain in the first place destroys the possibility of any chain of being in its classical sense. Freud’s notion and metaphorical model of the reserve constituted by the writing of the psyche and converting the memory trace into a Derridean trace again condition this “enlarged *différance* and the possibility of putting in reserve.”

This point need not contradict the suggestion that history is a better model for memory than memory for history. As we have seen, Freud’s “history” underutilizes, even represses, some of the potential of his own matrix of memory. It can be used more richly in order to produce different, *general* economies of memory *and* history, and both a richer difference and a richer interaction between them, leading to an interactively heterogeneous and heterogeneously interactive or complementary dynamics of the individual and the historical.

*Différance*, in particular, opens up this dynamics and thus gives more difference and more interaction, more mediation, to this “liberation of memory,” but again without at the same time suggesting, to use this term broadly, a *utopian* understanding of free, unconstrained interpretation, science, art, or community; interpretive, theoretical, ethical, or political pluralism; and so forth. As I have stressed throughout this study, Derrida’s deconstruction and other general economies can, in this sense, be juxtaposed to a number of recent, and some not so recent, theories, often specifically involving the question of history. One can think, in particular, of Deleuze’s model, certain aspects of Foucault’s vision, various Marxist and post-Marxist economies, Habermasian and post-Habermasian, and several other approaches, including some having Derridean, Freudian, or Nietzschean genealogies or attempting, usually unsuccessfully, to reconcile or otherwise accommodate and reaccommodate, Nietzsche, Freud, or Derrida to such utopian programs.<sup>21</sup> The reaccommodation at issue may even proceed by means of irreducible *differends*. The *differends* in such

cases would still be seen as conducive to theoretical, ethical, political, interpretive programs, which would have, however, to be seen as untenable from Nietzschean, Freudian, or Derridean perspectives.<sup>22</sup> It is not, of course, that there are no overlapping or interactive, or indeed complementary, aspects or dimensions, theoretical or political, of such discourses, as we have seen, specifically and necessarily between various restricted and general economies. Nor could one claim that there no works that attempt rigorously to explore these interactions.<sup>23</sup> The problem rather is what can and cannot overlap and how such discourses can be brought together or, of course, played out against each other, and what is the nature and structure of the constraints upon such relationships. The diverse and conflicting theoretical and political economies—the play of forces—and discourses they generate continue to operate on the same scene, which is of course never quite the same. At times, *but not always*, they can indeed join their forces or some of their theoretical or political agendas, or enter theoretically or politically productive conflicts or contrasts, within a manifold general economic and complementary *différance*, or indeed, moving from one *différance* to another. But they do so, once again, “for other reasons than hitherto.” The historical or, complementary, historical-ahistorical field of these forces and these reasons necessitates precisely the general economy and complementarity of history-ahistory at issue; and whether memory, history, or politics, including academic politics, are concerned, this general economy must be seen as fundamentally anti-utopian, as Nietzsche was the first to understand in full measure.

The “exteriority” of which Derrida speaks is that which at once “constitutes and effaces . . . conscious subjectivity” and, it follows, unconscious subjectivity as well. On the one hand, subjectivity must be “constituted” as a necessary fiction—biological, psychological, philosophical, social, and practical, including political. On the other hand, subjectivity must be suspended, but in a different sense of this imperative, namely by exposing the fictional nature of subjectivity and deconstructing the classical concepts involved in the production of this necessary fiction.

By the same token, one cannot, as a result of this liberation of memory, “liberate” oneself from *presence* at either level, the individual—memory—or the collective—history. As we have seen, along with, and as, repression, presence appears as a necessary and unavoidable effect of the

differential deferrals of *différance* and the closures that are induced in the process. In Derrida's rendition of this economy, engaging both Freud and Bataille, and possibly Heidegger, or indeed Kant and Hegel:

Spacing [*l'espace*] as writing is the becoming-absent and the becoming-unconscious of the subject. By the movement of its drift/derivation [*dérive*] the emancipation of the sign constitutes in return the desire of presence. That becoming—or that drift/derivation—does not befall the subject which would choose it or would passively let itself be drawn along by it. As the subject's relationships with its own death, this becoming is the constitution of subjectivity. On all levels of life's organization, that is to say, of *the economy of death*. All graphemes are of a testamentary essence. And the original absence of the subject of writing is also the absence of the thing or the referent. (*Of Grammatology*, 69; *De la grammatologie*, 100)

Constituting and dislocating subjectivity, this economy of compensation-repression is, thus, operative at various levels—psychological, theoretical, theological, social, or political—in short, indeed “on all levels of life's organization.” By the same token, it also, and in the same movement, simultaneously constitutes and dislocates historicity and thus plays a fundamental and richly varied role in *writing* history—in either sense of writing, as Derrida's writing becomes necessary as a result—in shaping the textual constitution of records of history and theoretical or political—or again *historical*—uses and abuses of history. The practice of history will have to be related to the possibility and the necessity of repression operating within and shaping this textual play.<sup>24</sup> No matter how it functions in any given case, repression would be impossible without the closure of presence, or again difference; and as positive and negative force this closure will affect, although differently, either a restricted or a general economy.

Benjamin's *Theses* point toward this necessity of repression and presence. Benjamin's perception is made in the wake, or the shadow, or in the light of Nietzsche's insights; in fact, he cites Nietzsche in his twelfth thesis. Pertinently perhaps for the theoretical, historical, and political ideology of historical materialism, Benjamin's Nietzsche there is the Nietzsche of “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life.” At issue is history that “we need for . . . the sake of life and action, not so as



to turn comfortably away from life and action, let alone for the purpose of extenuating the self-seeking life and the base and cowardly action" (*Untimely Meditations*, 59; KSA 1:245). The *Genealogy*, however, and the discussion of memory there, which, as we have seen, extends, complicates, and problematizes earlier insights, are also felt strongly in Benjamin. Thus he writes:

A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a *present* [*Gegenwart*] which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop. For this notion defines the present in which he himself is writing history. Historicism gives the "eternal" image of the past; historical materialism supplies a unique experience with the past. The historical materialist leaves it to others to be drained by the whore called "Once upon a time" in historicism's bordello. He remains in control of his powers, man enough to blast open the continuum of history. (*Illuminations*, 262; "Über den Begriff der Geschichte," *Gesammelte Schriften* I:2)

The language is strong and the metaphors are not unproblematic. So, to a degree, are the conceptions, too, even given that Benjamin clearly understands the fictionality and the strategic—perhaps, above all, the political—character of the presence he wants. Both the problems and strengths of his thesis are now relatively clear. There are always splendors and miseries in, or out of, the bordellos of history, whether as historicism or ahistoricism, materialist or idealist, dialectical, structuralist or deconstructive, or still other; psychoanalysis, too, cannot be forgotten, of course. One may well also need to be *woman* enough "to blast open the continuum of history." Revolutionary action, however, in this or other respects may be more complex, too. At times one needs to blast open the continuum. At times one needs to utilize the *continuity* or *dis-continuity* of continuity; it can be read as both, or as both at once, in Benjamin. At times one needs to blast out of historicism's bordello or prison or ghetto—many metaphors can be put to work here. At times one may need to be drained by the "rhetoric of temporality" or atemporality, or reversals of historical sequences, which in turn, however, are never unconstrained.

Benjamin's theses suggest a variety of temporal and rhetorical modes and perspectives, coupled with many discontinuities and reversals, and

they become the exploration of these possibilities under the theoretical and political demands of historical materialism. Perhaps the most striking, and most famous, example is the ninth thesis, which is also the most anti-Hegelian—or Hegelian-anti-Hegelian. Benjamin's vision there emerges in the shadow of Hegel's vision of the closure of History as sacrifice and Absolute Knowledge in the end of the *Phenomenology*, but it suggests a very different history and a very different closure:

My wing is ready for flight,

I would like to turn back,

If I stayed living time,

I would have little luck.

[Mein Flügel ist zum Schwung bereit

ich kehrte gern zurück

denn blieb' ich auch lebendige Zeit

ich hätte wenig Glück]

—Gerhard Scholem, "*Gruss vom Angelus*"

A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. The angel of history must look like this. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage, and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him onto the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. What we call progress is this storm. (*Illuminations*, 257–58; *Gesammelte Schriften* I, 2:697–98; translation modified)

Certainly, a general economic and complementary theory and perhaps practice of history must refigure many different forms of presence and continuity, or difference and rupture. Benjamin's theses invoke only some of them. But the theses themselves, their power and their problems—their textuality—are determined by a general economy and thus by the closure of presence or difference, on the one hand, and the constraints of the indeterminate and undecidable, and complementary, on the other.

Klee's—or rather Benjamin's Klee's—angel is always already suspended in the absolute past of a certain *différance* as the irreducible and uncontainable—irreducibly uncontainable—and forever expanding parergon of Klee's painting—from, but without origin in, Klee himself to Benjamin, to us as viewers of Klee and readers of Benjamin. To the extent that one can speak of history, the history the angel sees produces his gaze and what he sees. But it may not be—and cannot always be—the history that he sees, and it may not be—and cannot always be—history.

One of the main tasks of a critical analysis is to *analyze* the enigmatic concept, or nonconcept, of repression and the efficacy of repression and its functioning in theoretical and historical texts, both precritical—metaphysical—and critical—general economic. In the latter type of text a repression might also take classical forms, enabling a critique or deconstruction of a deconstructive text—a move and a claim much favored by now traditional, *classical* deconstructive criticism. Repression, however, particularly as it is conceived general economically, extends far beyond these limits. As we have seen, it may very well be that the most radical difference can never appear, partly because it is threatening, dangerous. It must be repressed even within the general economy, as it has been repressed by classical discourse, although the differences between them remain crucial. Operating at the theoretical, historical, or political level and in all interpretation, such a repression would be part of the closure of presence, or difference, in its protective function.

Whatever the degree of necessity of presence, however, one cannot postulate *presence* as anterior and prior to the movement that produces presence along with differences. While retaining the necessity of presence, repetition—for example, Freud's "repetition compulsion"—or repression, one must see them as "effects" produced by this movement and this play. As I said, an analogous process pertains to other psychological and historical effects of "permanence" and transformations leading to lasting—"permanent"—configurations. As Derrida writes, again on Freud but engaging Heidegger along the way:

No doubt life protects itself by repetition, trace, *différance* (deferral). But we must be wary of this formulation: there is no life present *at first* which would *then* come to protect, postpone, or reserve itself in *différance*. The latter constitutes the essence of life. Or rather: as *différance* is

not an *essence*, as it is not anything, it is *not* life, if Being is determined as *ousia*, presence, essence/existence, substance or subject. Life must be thought of as trace before Being may be determined as presence. (*Writing and Difference*, 203; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 302)

One understands very little about Derrida's *différance* unless one understands that *différance* is also memory and—and *as*, and *as not*—history. But one will not understand more about *différance* unless one understands what happens to memory and history once they are comprehended by *différance*, including a *différance* of the relationship between memory and history. Presence, *while* an *irreducible* aspect of memory, can be seen only in relation to the radical drift-derivation *producing* presence, or consciousness and knowledge. This drift-derivation must be distinguished from the becoming of classical philosophy—the becoming-presence or difference-presence, the continuum—as in Hegel's, Husserl's, or Heidegger's economy of temporality and history, and many other theories, or histories, that overtly or explicitly share the same grounding and conform to a restricted economy as the metaphysics of presence. In several of his texts, Derrida effectively analyses and deconstructs the mutual complicity of the history of philosophy and the history of the idea of history, the complicity understood by Derrida very differently from Hegel.<sup>25</sup>

The historical aspect of the Derridean economy emerges at many crucial moments of Derrida's analysis, especially in his inscription of *différance*. While neither synchronic nor diachronic, *différance* is productive of both synchronies and diachronies. It must therefore engage the question of history, even though and because it is also the efficacy of the repression of *history*, or difference in general, that persists throughout the history of philosophy and intellectual and political history.

Such a repression often functions, as in Hegel and in his shadow, in the form and the name of history, difference, plurality, multiplicity, heterogeneity, and other forces dislocating presence. Hence Derrida's qualification of the "historical": "If the word 'history' did not in and of itself convey the motif of a final repression of difference, one could say that only differences can be 'historical' from the outset and in each of their aspects [*seules de différences peuvent être d'entrée de jeu et de part en part 'historique'*]" (*Margins*, 11; *Marges*, 12).<sup>26</sup>

The general economy of history is more radically historical than anything that Hegel and various Hegelianisms can conceive; and it is such by virtue of being at once "more" and "less" historical, by being always "more or less" historical. It necessitates a radical critique of metaphysical historicism and makes it impossible to subsume "knowledge" under the name "history," or the name "knowledge," or any unique or final name. Still, Derrida symptomatically gives a certain—if, let me stress, always *conditional*—priority to the historical at many crucial junctures. First of all, the *general economy of différance* can no more insist on erasing anything absolutely than on maintaining anything absolutely. Beyond that, however, "history," "historically" speaking, has had a much greater role in enhancing difference than in repressing difference.

The repression of difference through difference—that is, a repression of a *more* radical difference through a *less* radical difference—does take place. Such reappropriations could even proceed by borrowing the propositions and rhetoric of a more radical difference; and they can borrow the rhetoric of the "after" without necessarily returning to any given "before." Rather, they occupy and constitute the historical and political space of theoretical difference. One must be careful, of course, in using the term "space" and mapping such a "space," or in applying these distinctions among the theoretical, the historical, and the political. One can never claim to map and synchronize these differences and thus the space itself once and for all; moreover, the distinctions at issue must in turn be seen as general economic, and thus subject to many losses in one's representation of a given historico-theoretical configuration. The "space" at issue is often nonlinear enough, never quite space or time, although at times it is either or both. In practice, however, while such theories often claim distance from "before," their proximity with "before" is pervasive. Given a "theoretical space" created by the matrix of general economy, one can always reinsert one's discourse into this space with a different degree of difference inscribed and a different *claim* made for this difference.

There are many reasons for making such claims, in addition to the always inevitable attempt to incorporate the latest—the best or most fashionable—theory into an old theoretical or political agenda. These attempts take diverse forms and are by no means to be discounted; nor are they always ineffective. They need not and cannot always be reduced

to a claim such as “It is entirely possible to have both”—that is, a radical theoretical matrix, such as Derrida’s, and an old political agenda, overt or hidden—although the latter is far from uncommon either. When, however, a rigorous connection is attempted, as opposed to a mere claim, such attempts, before or after deconstruction, would present standard cases of the metaphysics of presence. Thus they themselves become targets for deconstruction, although they can be subtle and complex, play out different forms and different degrees of difference and presence, and engage different political and theoretical agendas.

The distinction “before” and “after” deconstruction is important, even given that Nietzsche predates many of the cases that come “before.” I am not referring to such cases as Heidegger, Levinas, Bakhtin, or Althusser, where a difference that is claimed would be different from what a general economy would offer, such as *différance* in Derrida, although *différance*, could be and has been projected into these texts by readers and interpreters so as to conform to the configuration at issue at the moment. The situation would be different in the cases of Deleuze, particularly the later Deleuze, and Lyotard, for whom, as we have seen, a very radical difference would be accompanied by massive theoretical and political utopias, incompatible with a radical conception of difference from the perspective of general economy. Although in turn a different case, Kristeva’s post-structuralist phase belongs, I think, to the latter category as well. In all these cases, one can effectively speak of the “reinstatement” of “presence” in one form or another as a fundamental ground—as either controlling difference or coexisting alongside difference. Both claims would be untenable and, in all cases just listed, can be deconstructed from the Derridean perspective.

The degree of the claim is crucial, for “reinstallments” of all sorts can occur in a critical text as well. A critical text can no more absolutely control itself than a metaphysical text. It is distinguished from the metaphysical text precisely by not claiming to have such control, although it may, even must, have *better* conceptual and textual control. Once again, however, there is no unique form of textual practice—theoretical, critical, or historical—that will guarantee the effectiveness of the ensuing text. Radical difference, such as *différance*, demands a general economic text; but such a text can have many styles, even if it always requires a plural style.

Foucault's is another important and very complex case, particularly in the context of the question of history, as theory and practice. Foucault made an extraordinary contribution to the radical reshaping of theoretical questioning and the field itself, from history to literary criticism and theory, and many other fields, that has taken place in recent years. Foucault's analysis had a major role in our understanding as to which issues should be discussed and *how* they should be discussed and formulated, and conversely, what it is no longer possible to claim or even to discuss. While permeated by much Derridean or deconstructive rhetoric and idiom, the scene and agenda of theory during the last decade has been far more Foucauldian than anything else. Even Marxism, which, often interactively, has powerfully shaped the recent intellectual scene as well, can be seen as Foucauldian in many ways.

The question of how and to what extent Foucault can be incorporated into and possibly further reshape the framework at issue in this study—general economy and complementarity—is complex. It would require prolonged analysis of the relationship between Foucault and related developments, and the history of the unconscious and general economic thematics at issue in the present study, via Freud, Heidegger, Lacan, Deleuze, Derrida, modern feminist theory, and several other areas; and this analysis cannot be pursued here beyond the comments made earlier in this study. The Foucault-Derrida interface, in particular, has been a subject of many recent studies and discussions; and, what one might call, the Foucault-Derrida *différance* in general has often shaped the poststructuralist debate concerning “attitudes towards history” and has overshadowed the poststructuralist scene as a whole, particularly in the United States. Derrida's critique of Foucault makes a strong case, but remains somewhat limited—for one thing, by addressing only Foucault's early texts, and still in a very limited way. Foucault's early archaeological texts are indeed permeated by uncritical assumptions and propositions that impair their power and by now their impact as well, although we might do well to reread them—after poststructuralism and after post-modernism. Against these early texts, “Cogito and the History of Madness” and Derrida's scattered critical remarks elsewhere possess considerable force. Foucault's later texts, particularly those of his middle period, are a more interesting case, although they, too, are far from always unproblematic. Significantly in the present context, the shift in Foucault's

approach is closely related to his reading of Nietzsche and his analysis of the structure and economy of power, as against the more structuralist thematics of his earlier works. One can make a similar case for the significance of Bataille and in a very different and more complex way for Derrida and deconstruction in later Foucault. For coming after Derrida's critique and his work in general, and related developments, Foucault's reply to and attack on Derrida engages complex projections into, correlations with, and corrections of Foucault's earlier texts by both Foucault's own later thinking and postdeconstructive ideas. The latter clearly affect Foucault's later texts, such as, beyond Foucault's reply to Derrida,<sup>27</sup> topographical economies of the middle period, on which I have commented earlier in this study.

Much of Deleuze's work belongs to this orbit and this problematics as well, in relation to Foucault, who has commented on Deleuze extensively, including in a Preface to *Anti-Oedipus* and in general, beginning with Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962). In *Foucault* (1986), Deleuze correctly sees Nietzsche as the central figure of the Foucauldian topography, thus reaffirming the significance of Nietzsche's role in the historico-theoretical landscape at issue in this study.

Just as materiality shapes general economy, however, general economy in turn constrains the functioning of the concept or nonconcept of matter, which is a crucial point for both Bataille and Derrida, as well as for Nietzsche and Bohr, and which distinguishes their theories as general economies from, among others, Deleuzian, Foucauldian, and Marxist economies, which must be seen as restricted. In particular, a general economy of matter, or of material history, must be continually checked against collapsing into a dialectic, even though it must, once again, re-comprehend dialectic by refiguring the limits where various forms of dialectic may remain operative. This necessity concerns as much materiality and historicity as the unconscious, or consciousness, all of which must be related by way of their mutual complementarities and other complementarities they may enter, separately or jointly. In *Positions*, Derrida comments on materiality in the context and co-text of Marx, Engels, Lenin, but again proceeding via Bataille and general economy, "the general economy whose traits [he] attempted to outline based on a reading of Bataille": "It follows that if, and in the extent to which, *matter* in this general economy designates, as you [Houdebine] said, radical alterity (I



[Derrida] will specify; in relation to philosophical oppositions), then what I write can be considered 'materialist'" (*Positions*, 64; *Positions*, 87).

Derrida's qualification of Houdebine's initial phrase "radical alterity" is crucial, along with the quotation marks that also *mark* the general economy against *Marx*.<sup>28</sup> Metaphysical materialism *fixes* matter by philosophical oppositions, or fully maps it by a set of philosophical propositions, again *fixed*, even if as becoming or indeed as "radical alterity." Derrida's quotation marks are around *materialism*, not *matter*, although the *position* is clear, however equivocal or rather plural it might and must be as a position. One might want to put them around *matter* as well, but their absence is rhetorically effective in the proposition against metaphysical materialism—the *idealism* of matter. The qualification is crucial too, for if matter is *différance*—or better, *a* *différance* in a general economy—"then what I write can be considered 'materialist.'" *Différance*, then, must be related to "matter." But if "matter" enters a relation to and a field of inscription of *différance*, it does so by way of a general economic complementarity with the unconscious and history.

Analogously and interactively or complementarily, then, if "the unconscious" relates to a *différance* in a general economy, then what Derrida writes can be considered . . . but there is no corresponding "ism," and one cannot quite speak of psychology or psychoanalysis, although Freud would be a proper name analogous to Marx in the context, and both frameworks are materialist.

The following formulation must be added: if history is analogously figured as *différance* in this general economic and complementary field, then Derrida's *writing* can be considered "historical." I oppose this term to "historicist," which is, I think, pertinent, reflecting the effects of differences in the history of different terms and "isms." "History" thus functions in this general economy as "matter" and "the unconscious"—under erasure, one might say. If left without qualifications, this formulation could in turn "convey the motif of the final repression of difference." The general economic complementarity of the three—matter, history, and the unconscious—would de-limit the field of materialist historicity by simultaneously expanding and constraining it.

If one extends to Marx the understanding of restricted economies as those of controlled interpretive, theoretical, and historical differences and

transformations, as considered earlier, one can locate an important proximity between Marxist and Heideggerian discourse. This proximity is far from accidental. Heidegger attempts to think of the grounds upon which such a historical economy as an economy of *controlled* transformations, as in Marx and Hegel, is possible. This general understanding is, as we have seen, Heidegger's powerful contribution to our understanding of the Heraclitean thematics of transformations; in this case, however, it acquires additional significance. Heidegger invokes Marx at the end of "The Principle of Thinking," an essay that has complex relationships to Nietzsche and to Freudian thematics. At issue there is the early, "more philosophical" Marx. The essay itself as a whole moves decidedly in the Hegelian orbit, proceeding from the Introduction to the *Phenomenology*, and in fact from the question of death and sacrifice. Heidegger profoundly understood the historical character of "the question of thinking," of Hegelian logic and dialectic; and he uses them in order to ground the possibility of "thinking" in the question of history—despite its problems, this project is perhaps his greatest achievement. As he writes:

Karl Marx . . . declares that "*all of so called world-history* is nothing but the production of human beings by means of human work, the coming to be of nature for human beings" . . . .

Many will reject this interpretation of world history and its underlying conception of human nature. But no one can deny that today technology, industry, and economy, setting the standards for the work of the self-production of human beings, determine the reality of all that is real. Nevertheless, this observation only serves to exclude us from that dimension of thought within which Marx's assertion moves: world history is "the work of self-production of human beings." For here the word "work" (*Arbeit*) does not mean mere activity and accomplishment. The sense is rather that of Hegel's concept of work, thought of as the basic trait of dialectical process, by means of which the Becoming of the real unfolds and perfects its reality [*das Werden des Wirklichen dessen Wirklichkeit entfaltet und vollendet*]. Marx, in opposition [*Gegensatz*] to Hegel, sees the nature of reality not in absolute mind that comprehends itself but in human beings producing themselves and their means of living. That puts Marx in an extreme opposition to Hegel [*in einen äußersten Gegensatz*], but this very opposition binds Marx to Hegel's

metaphysics. For the life and prevailing force of reality is, everywhere, the work process as a dialectics, which means, as thinking, insofar as what is actually productive in any production is and remains thinking—be it understood and performed as metaphysical and speculative or as scientific and technical, or as a crude mixture of both. Every production is in itself re-flection [Re-flexion], thinking [Denken]. (“The Principles of Thinking,” *The Piety of Thinking*, 57; “Grundsätze des Denkens,” *Jahrbuch für Psychologie und Psychotherapie* (1958), 6:40–41; translation modified)

It is not that Heidegger does not displace Marx’s dialectic of history, including by shifting it too close to Hegel. Nor is it necessarily or only “the extreme opposition” that “binds Marx to Hegel’s metaphysics,” although Heidegger does anticipate here the configuration of reversal as it emerges in deconstruction. Still the perception of the fundamental bond itself, based on the dialectic of self-consciousness, in turn displaced by Marx, is powerful and important. Heidegger’s view of Marx’s, or for that matter Hegel’s, dialectic of history is not unambivalent; and Heidegger is obviously more positive toward Hegel who, according to the statement, grounds just about everything of importance in Marx. Much of what emerges in Heidegger as a *positive* assessment of Marx, however, and particularly *the fundamental grounding of history*, would have to be seen as *fundamentally problematic* from the perspective of general economy as economy *without* fundamental grounds. Locating fundamental determinations of that type, including the displacement of—proximity to or distance from—the truth, voice, meaning of, and thinking on Being, is the fundamental procedure of all Heidegger’s interpretations of philosophy, and everything else, and particularly Nietzsche. What is impossible in Nietzsche, however, is effective in reading Marx. The affinity that Heidegger finds in Marx, correctly, is conditioned by a—*restricted*—economy, which, as opposed to Nietzsche, shapes Marx’s dialectical political economy. It is the dialectic of consciousness and self-consciousness as, in the end, *Hegelian* mediation and history—history without the unconscious.

If, on the one hand, *différance* is, or “if there were a definition of *différance* it would be,” “precisely the limit, the interruption, the destruction of the Hegelian *relève* [*Aufhebung*] wherever it operates” (*Positions*, 40–41), and on the other hand “matter is radical alterity ( . . . in relation

to philosophical opposition)" (64), that is, if matter is also *différance*, it follows then that matter and, by implication, material history cannot be dialectical. To repeat, if *différance* is the destruction of *Aufhebung* and dialectic, and if matter is *différance*, it follows that material history cannot be dialectical. It follows according to the rules of formal logic. That is, it would follow by the rules of formal logic were it not for the fact that what is at stake in these propositions—and "what is at stake here is [indeed] enormous" (41)—and what makes it possible to relate them, radically exceeds logic, formal and transcendental alike. And before this logic can be applied, one has to arrive at these propositions and what relates them to each other after prolonged theoretical and textual labor, through Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Lacan, Althusser, Deleuze, Derrida, and a few others. Once, however—to conclude via Nietzsche—*Geist* is dead, so is dialectic.

Following Nietzsche, general economy in Bataille and then in Derrida has emerged, as it were, from the "unconscious" of the Hegelian system—in the shadow of Hegel, in either sense: "inside this shadow" and "overshadowed" by Hegel. But, as I have suggested, this genealogy need not necessarily imply that a general economy must irreducibly depend on Hegel textually or be figured in infinitesimal proximity to Hegel. Nietzsche's "general economy" could again serve as a major example in this respect. The joint—complementary—economy of history and the unconscious emerge so as to both dislocate and comprehend Hegel and Hegelianism, to (re)comprehend the conditions of their possibility and necessity and their theoretical and political limits. These conditions, possibilities, necessities, and limits will emerge as *historical*, in a *general economy*, whenever they must be seen *as* historical, *as* the unconscious whenever they must be seen *as* unconscious, or as many other things and under many other names, and at times as ahistorical or antihistorical.

Not that the phenomenology of the mind [i.e., *Geist*], which proceeded within the horizon of absolute knowledge or according to the circularity of the Logos, is thus *overturned* [*renversée*]. Instead of being simply overturned, it is comprehended: not comprehended by knowledge gathering comprehension, but inscribed within the opening of the general economy along with its horizons of knowledge and its figures of meaning. General economy folds these horizons and figures so that they will

be related not to a basis, but to the nonbasis of expenditure, not to the *telos* of meaning, but to the *indefinite* destruction of value. Bataille's atheology is also an a-teleology and an aneschatology. Even in its discourse, which already must be distinguished from sovereign affirmation, this atheology does not, however, proceed along the lines of negative theology; lines that could not fail to fascinate Bataille, but which, perhaps, still reserved, beyond all the rejected predicates, and even "beyond being," a "superessentiality"; beyond the categories of beings, a supreme being and an indestructible meaning. Perhaps; for here we are touching upon the limits and the greatest audacities of discourse in Western thought. We could demonstrate that the distances and proximities do not differ among themselves. (*Writing and Difference*, 271; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 398-99)<sup>29</sup>

"Here," then, "we are touching upon the limits of the greatest audacities of discourse in Western thought," on the one hand, and on the other "upon the point of greatest obscurity, on the very enigma of *différance*" (*Margins*, 19; *Marges*, 20). Derrida's choice of phrasing—"we are [only] touching"—in both cases is important. It reflects the modes of inscription characterizing much of general economy—but not all of it, not always, and often differently. This difference in operation can be seen in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida, for example; and in Derrida's case, Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Lacan are just as decisive as Hegel, Husserl, or Heidegger, indeed, in relation to the thematics at issue, arguably more so. The "distances and proximities," from, to, and between all the figures at issue are uneasily intermingled. They mirror and are the effects of trajectories of the unconscious historicity that they are themselves designed to inscribe.

These trajectories, however, may diverge at certain points—"for us, here, now"—quite radically from Hegel, but without a simultaneous infinitesimal proximity to him; and one cannot, in truth, say, as Derrida does here, nor perhaps can one "demonstrate" "that the distances and proximities do not differ among themselves." Often they do, even if they are often complementarized by proximities; and they suggest perhaps a proximity between Derrida and Hegel, from which one might want to distance one's texts—"today, here, now." It is true, however, that as Hegel's analysis of sense-certainty—of "us, here, now"—in the *Phenom-*

*enology* intimates, we cannot be certain in calculating these proximities and distances, continuities and breaks; and they are subject to radical uncertainty relations, indeed well beyond anything that could be anticipated by Hegel himself.

### More History, Less History, More or Less History

Given the conditions of general economy and complementarity, a theory of history can never be an absolutely closed system, including with respect to the complementarity of historical description and analysis or the theoretical analysis of history itself. Beyond the general effects of complementarity as part of the general economy of history and theory, and their many complementarities, I have indicated and to a degree engaged earlier in this study the possibilities of different theoretical and historical projects that the matrix of complementarity suggests specifically as complementarity, such as:

- the theoretical—or historico-theoretical—construction of complementarities, such as those of history and the unconscious, history and theory, theory and philosophy;

- the exploration of the operation of complementarities in a given text or set of texts;

- the exploration, by way of complementarities, of historico-theoretical continuities and dis-continuities, such as in this study with Hegel, and thus the economies of transformation enacted by a given text or a given ensemble of texts, such as those engaged by this study—Bohr's complementarity in modern physics and general economies in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida.

In the case of the complementarity of history and the unconscious, the exploration of psychoanalytic thematics and techniques, which have demonstrated their force in Derrida and Deleuze, among many others, will continue to play an important role. The major texts of the unconscious, such as Freud's, to begin with, or Lacan's, which often directly connect Freudian and historical thematics, are far from exhausted in this respect; their resources are rich and full of new possibilities.<sup>30</sup>

It may be useful to characterize some major traits emerging from the present analysis, as they relate to history:

*First*, every local historical perspective is figured as already, or “always already,” multiplied and thus further localized. This process corresponds to *dissemination* in Derrida’s sense, specifically in its opposition to polysemy as a containable plurality, in fact, or in effect, and in principle. All local boundaries and local unifications are provisional and may be differently reinscribed, further localized and further differentiated, or, conversely, further integrated or unified; their interplay is, in short, multiply complementary. An absolute localization or absolute fragmentation is just as impossible as an absolute unification. Broader structures continuously emerging in all such processes must always be taken into account, specifically the effects of permanence or extended stability, often introduced by radical transformations or revolutions—political, theoretical, artistic, or other.

*Second*, all local historical accounts, including all global accounts, which are always locally produced, appear at the site—and as an *effect*—of an interplay of heterogeneous histories and concepts of history. The latter, furthermore, may always take the form of an irreducible theoretical or practical—for example, political—conflict, analogous to what Lyotard calls the *differend*.<sup>31</sup> The potential, not to mention “actual,” conflicts involved must be taken into *account* within a general economy and complementarity of the historical; whenever necessary, they should be described by historical accounts conditioned by such a theory of history. Conversely, or complementarily, such an economy must also account for the effects of joined historical forces.

In this sense, historical or political difference is a rhetorically useful, but not quite precise term. One has to conceive of rich and multiple efficacies and complementarities of differences, similarities, and their interplay, such as the continuities and breaks or the proximities and distances within a given history. Nor would such other perspectives necessarily be recognized as equally valid. They are recognized as true or valid, of course, by those who hold them. Here as elsewhere, we are at the site of a potential, and potentially irreducible, conflict or *differend*. Such a conflict or *differend* is not inevitable, however; and an indeterminacy always exists, both with respect to a possible emergence of the possible resolution of such conflicts, or with respect to where, when, and how forces may be joined. In Nietzsche’s terms, these are the conditions of perspectivism, which is a complex economy in Nietzsche, even in nature,

let alone history: "Perspectivism is only a complex form of specificity. My idea is that every specific body strives to become master over all space and to extend its force (—its will to power:) and to thrust back all that resists its extension. But it continually encounters similar efforts on the part of other bodies and ends by coming to an arrangement ('union') with those of them that are sufficiently related to it; thus they then conspire together for power. And the process goes on—" (*The Will to Power*, sec. 636, p. 340; KSA 13:373–74).<sup>32</sup>

As opposed to Hegel and his World History, or Heidegger, and many others in their shadows, nothing can ever be unequivocally or unconditionally, once and for all, discounted or delegated to some India, Africa, or Siberia. These names have proved to have a powerful "unconscious" historical potential in relation to *Hegel's* World History. As Foucault's analysis shows—at times in spite of Foucault himself—these Indias, Africas, and Siberias can be found right in the center of Paris, perhaps the most central center ever proclaimed as such—from the Indians, or the American Indians, Africans, and Siberians on the streets to the metaphors of the vast expanses of mind, nature, or culture that these names offer.

This point is crucial. Hegel, aware of the multitude of contemporaneous events elsewhere, would not deny the possibility that some of these exterior regions and forces may hold the potential of becoming historical; and as we have seen, he offers an extremely complex, if still restricted, economy of historical difference. His claims instead concern the possibility of becoming or not becoming historical *within his scheme of history*. The scheme, however, collapses precisely as a result of the potentiality of such exterior forces to become historical. Since there can be no unified, all-encompassing history, history always reinstating Hegel, or indeed a naive Hegelianism, the question is what can be discounted, when and how. In a general economy, that balance must be determined to be *finally* undetermined, which often means locally both at once—determined and undetermined—demanding ever more complex complementarities of historical accounts and models themselves.

*Third*, particularly in relation to the history of theory, but with potentially important implications elsewhere, a general economy of history must consider, "calculate," the effects and the diversity of the effects, of *presence* and the *closure* of presence—or the closure of difference and other interpretive closures as considered in Chapter 3—and of the closure



or closures of *theory*. Philosophy, specifically as the metaphysics of presence, plays a central role in this respect, but the economy of closure at issue cannot be restricted thereby. One must engage complementary relations to other theoretical fields, such as both the natural or exact and the human sciences, psychoanalysis, or literary criticism and theory. The investigation of the interplay and the transformations of different closures, in any given case or more globally, is itself an important potential theoretical, historical, or critical project.

*Fourth*, this global calculus—"All history is like that"—of history and the unconscious, together with whatever unifications may emerge there, is itself subject to the structural loss defining general economy. This loss further differentiates the calculus at issue, so that it becomes impossible always to use history—or *any* terms or names—in all cases, in practice and in principle. This impossibility exceeds simply allowing other local or global perspectives on history. Even the perspective of radical differentiation must be seen as incurring a certain ineluctable loss of presentation, and this perspective may eventually prove to be just another theoretical "error." In the history of theory, which always has a huge unconscious in this sense—its Indias, Africas, and Siberias—there may always be something else going on, just as in any other history. Most crucially, however, what makes "historicity" complex and irreducible, *in those cases where configurations and economies will be configured as historical*, is also that which—never the same—demands that there be configurations and economies in which history and historicity will be reducible or, in Derrida's terms, differently *iterable*. To say so is quite different from suggesting that any *historicity as historicity*, named as such, is not always historical, even if the latter becomes nonsimple, nonlinear, heterogeneous, disseminated, and differentiated through and through, without a single or undivided origin. A far more radical plurality is at stake that allows for no absolutely indispensable economy, concept, or name. Otherwise, after the metaphysics of history has been deconstructed, the metaphysics of historicity emerges. As the transcendental signified or signifier of history is erased, that of historicity appears.

History and historicity, or the unconscious, can be inscribed as complementary only in relation to other names and economies. This complementarity is necessary for history and historicity and the unconscious and their interaction; but neither history nor the unconscious nor any given

economy of interaction between them can encompass all possibilities. The closure of history and historicity is powerful, but it cannot (en)close everything. It interacts with different closures and thus always has the potential to be taken over by any of them. Against Hegel and Hegel's *Geist* that can only negate *itself*—ultimately a weakness, a disability—a general economy demands the possibility of ever-new exteriority. It demands radical, but never absolute exteriority; and any exterior may always be suspended, or differently appropriated or reappropriated, and it can never be determined once and for all which, when, or how.

Under these general economic conditions or constraints, then, history and the so-called whole of history, whether in Hegel's, Heidegger's, Marx's, or Freud's sense, or any other sense, *cannot* be a "whole," or always constitute a history. It is *perhaps* possible that at some point a concept of wholeness will be introduced that will render this statement and general economy itself obsolete or at least theoretically problematic. "Today," for "us," "here," "now," history can never be fully or unconditionally integrated into one history, *the* history, not even, as we have seen, for a single fact or event at any given moment. By the same token, various local historical perspectives cannot always be correlated; nor can they ever be fully correlated. Moreover, given the impossibility of always or fully correlating "all" perspectives, the very notion of "all perspectives" is equally impossible. Different and conflicting perspectives, *under certain conditions*—but, again, *not always*—can be *negotiated* as "errors." They can also be practiced or imposed, of course, or self-imposed, as "truths"—by power, seduction, or still otherwise.

Histories, then, cannot be correlated or integrated, assembled or reassembled together into one history, or only into history, whether by way of form or by way of content. Such correlation of histories and such integration of history may not be needed, however. We may be much better off without them. One can actually question the theoretical as well as the practical, including the political, necessity of the universal—let us say, Hegelian—project as well as the necessity of bringing perspectival diversity to a common denominator. Perhaps globalization is too heavy a burden for theory and practice alike. Hegel had to pay an enormous price for his absolute conceptions and the picture of history they entail, as well as for the consequences of the logic of the universal and absolute. In the end—also in the sense of Hegel's teleology—Hegel had to sacrifice—also

in the sense of that term in the end of the *Phenomenology*—just about the whole world, the “whole” world history.<sup>33</sup> Beyond Hegel, one can offer a long list of problematic—often far more problematic than in Hegel himself, and at times disastrous—theoretical, political, and other consequences of global ideologies.

The economy of any set of theoretical, ideological, or political preferences, obviously, is complex, irreducibly nonsimple. It amounts to the very general economy at issue here in which “the category of choice seems particularly trivial [la catégorie de choix paraît bien légère],” as Derrida says, invoking in fact “a region of historicity” (*Writing and Difference*, 293; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 428). We should naturally hesitate to speak of necessity, an equally trivial category in the same domain, but we must also complementarize and within refigured limits use both categories. The historical divergence at issue is structural, ineluctable. Our “global” historical perspective forbids any unconditional totalization of history. It will not forbid, however, the conditional formation of broader comprehensive historical projects, accounts, or political programs. How can it forbid them? How can it forbid anything at all, given the triviality of the category of necessity, particularly in a metaphysical opposition to the equally trivial category of choice? Rather, it will compel us to account for such conceptions, *in a general economy*, reconfiguring and comprehending them as local “historical” effects, specifically those relating to the unconscious. This general economy is itself “historically” constituted as necessarily heterogeneous.

The historical framework emerging from the history of thematics of the unconscious does then offer a viable and productive opposition to Hegelianism as a framework of the conscious and self-conscious integration of history that has dominated the question of history from Hegel, or before, on. While such an economy of history would depend on a matrix of the unconscious, it cannot be confined there. There are, to begin with, many metaphorical models of that type, even in any one writer discussed here, and they are related even more richly between different writers. A history that makes such a general economy possible and its proper names, from Nietzsche on, may and often must function against Freud, above all against Freud on history, the *Hegelian* Freud. Moreover, other historical trajectories must be engaged; and they must be seen as different, however much interaction may historically emerge or reemerge at

certain points, otherwise a Hegelian totality would be reinstated. In short, such trajectories must be seen as complementary; and that complementarity refers specifically to the trajectories of the very idea of complementarity, which, focusing around Bohr's matrix, engage the history of modern science. These trajectories thus complementarize, but again do not unify, the history of modern scientific thinking with the history of the unconscious and matter, and of the general economy which engages both, together with the history of the question of history itself.

Derrida suggests: "Now, as for Nietzsche being a reader of Hegel: it's a standard topic, of course. Nietzsche is a reader and a major critic of Hegel. All of Nietzsche's affirmations can be interpreted as anti-Hegelian affirmations. Well, obviously, as is always the case when one has a great adversary—and Hegel is Nietzsche's great adversary, isn't he?—there will be moments when the adversaries greatly resemble each other. It would be easy to show that there is a dialectic, a Hegelianism in Nietzsche" (*The Ear of the Other*, 59).

That claim actually might not be so easy to sustain, particularly in the later Nietzsche, except insofar as one must utilize dialectic in one's critical or theoretical work. There is, in Nietzsche, still more *history against* all dialectic and Hegelianism, which might convert this resemblance into a radical difference—the difference of the unconscious, even, as Derrida's own text shows, "at the point of the greatest proximity to Hegel." As was suggested throughout this analysis, however, there might be much history in Nietzsche without proximity to dialectic and Hegelianism. Derrida is customarily careful here to speak of "a dialectic" and "a Hegelianism," rather than *history*. The statement might therefore be seen as a critique of dialectic—throughout Hegel and in Nietzsche whenever dialectic returns to Nietzsche's test—rather than a critique of history in Hegel or Nietzsche. Once dialectic is subtracted, however, there is much more history in Nietzsche than in Hegel, besides many other things, historical and ahistorical, that Hegel cannot offer.

Retaining a *historical*—indeed a *radically historical* dimension of Nietzsche, it is the difference from Hegel that I would want to insist upon, even if there is still a brief, the briefest shadow of Hegel in Nietzsche—"the moment of the briefest shadow. *INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA*." Nietzsche, perhaps more with Hegel than with Kant, would still, and *must*, I think, be very distant from Hegel: "Let us not be deceived either

in the Kantian or in the Hegelian manner:—we no longer *believe* in morality, as they did, and consequently we have no need to found a philosophy with the aim of justifying morality. Neither the critical nor the historicist philosophy [*Sowohl der Kriticismus als der Historicismus*] has any stimulus for us in *this* respect:—so what stimulus has it, then?” (*The Will to Power*, sec. 415, p. 223; KSA 12:163; translation modified).

But, then, how far does the shadow of Hegel and philosophy extend? How far, even if admittedly they do indeed extend very far? What is the balance of invasions, mutual inhibitions, continuities, and breaks? What is the play—chiaroscuro—of light and shadows, long and brief shadows, dark and light shadows? Light shadows?

One could then speak, perhaps, if not of the disappearance of a shadow, at least of the briefest shadow, as Nietzsche does, although we must already speak of the disappearance of *the* shadow. It may no longer be the moment of engagement, however necessary, necessary even for a transformation, but rather a—Nietzschean—moment of overcoming, including quite possibly the overcoming of Nietzsche as well: “Noon; moment of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity; *INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA*”—insofar as one forgets other shadows, or while they *appear* as suns for a brief moment, the moment of the briefest shadow.

One should, then, perhaps look for Nietzscheanism in Hegel rather than for Hegelianism in Nietzsche. “No man who is called a philosopher really understands what is meant by complementary descriptions,” according to Bohr, which may be true, particularly insofar as philosophy must maintain what is defined by philosophy as philosophy. But, then, Bohr’s statement would not apply to Nietzsche, even if one calls him a philosopher, as even Nietzsche himself does on occasion. Bohr, too, is sometimes called and perceived as a philosopher—even more a philosopher than a physicist. It may well be that the statement at issue speaks, above all, of the possibility of a different philosophy. If so, in order to understand complementarity or general economy, philosophy, no less than history, will need the unconscious.

That point in no way diminishes, but rather enhances Hegel’s discovery of the historical, which remains just as momentous as Nietzsche’s and Freud’s discovery of the unconscious. The unconscious, general economy, and complementarity often need history and at times philosophy.

Much else is needed; and—such is the law of the complementary, the *against Geist* law—there is always something else: something other than philosophy, something other than history, something other than the unconscious, something other than anything. There is always something else.

# NOTES

## Chapter 1. Matrices

1. Feyerabend's "*against method*" or, as he also calls it, "epistemological anarchism" or "epistemological dadaism" may be regarded as a kind of postmodernism in the history of science. "Against method" is also "against Hegel," even if Feyerabend's own project is not free from problematic and at times Hegelian features. In the wake of Kuhn and, still more actively, Feyerabend, the modern, or postmodern, history and sociology of science has been a richly and productively developing field. A number of recent works offer many interesting affinities and parallels with poststructuralist developments in the humanities. For a comprehensive and theoretically advanced representation of the current state of the field and the debates and participants involved, see Andrew Pickering, ed., *Science as Practice and Culture*.

2. Here, partly in relation to Burke, whose *Attitudes Towards History* begins with William James, together with Whitman and Emerson, one should point to American pragmatism, specifically William James's essay, "On Some Hegelisms" (in *The Will to Believe*). The essay offers important insights on contingency, fragmentation, and ambiguity, all of which James sees, against Hegel, as radically irreducible. In this respect the essay is quite close to Nietzsche's writings, with

which it is contemporary. James was one of Bohr's favorite philosophers; and in fact, as Pais notes, "already in 1891 James had introduced the term 'complementarity' to denote the quality of consciousness in schizophrenics" (James, *The Principles of Psychology* 1: 206; Pais, *Niels Bohr's Times*, 424).

3. Cited by Derrida in *L'Écriture et la différence*, 396–97; *Writing and Difference*, 270. Alan Bass's translation of the passage is slightly modified here. Bataille pursues these ideas throughout his life, and I shall refer to various related texts as the present analysis proceeds. His main text on general economy is *La Part maudite*; *The Accursed Share*.

4. Throughout the present study the word *writing* is italicized, when it refers to 'writing' in Derrida's sense.

5. See, for example, Derrida's formulation in *Dissemination*, also inscribing by means of this *différance-dissemination* a certain—general—economy of history (*Dissemination*, 26; *La Dissémination*, 33). See also Barbara Johnson's footnote (*Dissemination*, 26 n. 26).

6. See, in particular, Hegel's "Anmerkung. Der Ausdruck: Aufheben" in the first *Logic* (*Werke* 5:113–14; *Hegel's Science of Logic*, 106–8).

7. The English translation is taken from *Writing and Difference*, 275.

8. I have specifically considered this latter case in *Reconfigurations* (63–112).

9. See specifically Bataille's comments to that effect in *The Accursed Share*, 12–13.

10. On "effects," see Derrida's comments in *Positions*, 66–67. I shall consider this issue further later in this study.

11. Sartre, as Derrida notes, points out that Bataille's unknowledge is fundamentally, "essentially historical" (*Writing and Difference*, 336 n. 31; *L'Écriture et la différence*, 395 n. 1). Such is the case in part by virtue of the irreducible specificity of any given "experience" of unknowledge or sovereignty, as indicated earlier. In this sense, it is similar to the irreducible specificity—"uniqueness"—of any quantum mechanical event and any knowledge—observation, information, or measurement—concerning such an event. Any quantum information and the means of obtaining it always mutually, reciprocally determine each other and make every quantum event or, rather, configuration unique. In this sense, all quantum mechanical data is irreducibly historical. This uniqueness and reciprocity—this *historicity*—of quantum configurations are, as shall be seen, crucial to Bohr's analysis; and this aspect of quantum physics could have influenced Bataille's ideas.

12. *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*, 54–55. The literature—popular, semipopular, and technical—is of course immense, even leaving aside the number of books, in turn very large, on extraordinary developments since 1970, some of which are quite relevant in the present context. A brief bibliographical survey up to 1985 can be found in Jonathan Powers, *Philosophy and the*



*New Physics*, 189–94. Bohr’s own major work on the philosophy of complementarity is assembled in two volumes of essays: *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge* (hereafter APHK) and *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature* (hereafter ATDN). These two collections are reprinted as Volumes 1 and 2 of *The Philosophical Writings of Niels Bohr*. I shall also refer to relevant articles, archival sources, and extensive correspondence, including, in particular, from the Niels Bohr Archive: Bohr’s Manuscripts (NBA: BMSS) and Bohr’s Scientific Correspondence (NBA: BSC); *Archive for the History of Quantum Mechanics* (hereafter AHQP); and T. S. Kuhn et al., *Sources for the History of Quantum Mechanics*. Much of this material has been published in *Niels Bohr: Collected Works*, 6 vols., ed. Léon Rosenfeld and Erik Rüdinger. Beyond the works by the founders of quantum mechanics—Einstein, Bohr, Born, Heisenberg, Pauli, and Dirac—including their extremely useful correspondence and some classical works, such as Max Jammer’s *The Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics*, several recent books may be mentioned here, all of which contain extensive bibliographies of sources.

The most comprehensive studies of Bohr in recent literature are Henry J. Folse, *The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*; Dugald Murdoch, *Niels Bohr’s Philosophy of Physics*; Abraham Pais, *Niels Bohr’s Times, in Physics, Philosophy, and Polity*; Jan Faye, *Niels Bohr: His Heritage and Legacy*; and John Honner, *The Description of Nature: Niels Bohr and the Philosophy of Quantum Physics*. Roger Penrose’s *The Emperor’s New Mind: Concerning Computers, Minds, and the Laws of Physics* contains an elegant, extraordinarily interesting, and useful discussion of all major scientific developments in modern history, particularly of formal logic, including Gödel’s results, special and general relativity, and quantum physics. It is one of the very few studies to relate quantum mechanics and formal logic in a meaningful way. Its critique of “artificial intelligence” is also powerful and effective. I find some of the philosophical positions of the book untenable, however. The book is permeated by problematic ontotheological, specifically Platonist, conceptions, especially in relation to the truth of mathematical propositions, that are, I think, unnecessary for its best arguments. Richard P. Feynman’s *The Character of Physical Law* retains its value, particularly in showing some of the main aspects of scientific thinking, specifically in physics, both classical and quantum. See also his more recent *QED: The Strange Theory of Light and Matter*. For a more technical discussion, see two other excellent books by Pais, “*Subtle is the Lord . . .*” and *Inward Bound*, the latter also discussing more recent developments in the field.

13. In describing complementarity as such a general principle or attitude, Pais says that he “ha[s] found the complementary way of thinking liberating” (*Niels Bohr’s Times*, 24).

14. There are limits, rigorously defined in quantum mechanics itself by Heisen-

berg's uncertainty relations, where such features operate jointly as well, experimentally or theoretically, conceptually or metaphorically. It may be pointed out that measurement is a concept extensively considered by Hegel, particularly in the first, greater *Logic*, both in relation to Hegel's idea of logic and specifically in relation to the natural and exact sciences and mathematics. Hegel's logic, beyond its many other functions, aims to develop the underlying economy of any form of logic: mathematical, formal, scientific—theoretical or experimental—historical, moral, cultural, or political. Complementarity of course radically undermines Hegelian logic at all levels. Many of Hegel's elaborations, however, are necessitated by the epistemological problems analogous to, and often in effect the same as, those that quantum mechanics addresses a century later. Hegel "resolves" these problems by way of postulating *Geist* and its continuum of self-consciousness. I shall comment further on Hegel's treatment of these issues, which one should, as always, beware of oversimplifying, in the next chapter.

15. *Sämtliche Werke, Kritische Studienausgabe* (hereafter KSA) 1:879; *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* 2:178.

16. Derrida does speak of "indeterminacy" as well, specifically of the "controlled indeterminacy" of philosophy in his essay on Kant, "Economimesis" (3)—indicatively, in the context of Bataille and general economy. For Bataille "indeterminacy" and a loss in the content of knowledge is more important than undecidability, although, as shall be seen in Chapter 5, the thematics of modern mathematics, particularly of the continuum, also plays its role in Bataille.

17. See most specifically the reading of Freud in "Spéculer-Sur 'Freud,'" in *La Carte postale: De Socrate à Freud et au-delà*, translated as "To Speculate—On 'Freud,'" in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*.

18. Cited by Pais, *Inward Bound*, 244.

19. Conceptually, it is a well-known problem of Newtonian theory, from Berkeley on, as can be seen in Alexandre Koyré's "The Significance of the Newtonian Synthesis" (in *Newtonian Studies*). The problem can in fact be resolved, or at least effectively posed, only by way of complementarity—in the sense of the corresponding quantum mechanical matrix in physics or in an extended sense of complementarity in conceptual terms.

20. See Pais's discussion of "Einstein's vision" in "*Subtle is the Lord . . .*," 460–68 and *passim*. Of some interest is Einstein's position on the question of matter, which is rather close to the Marxist view of matter as objective reality existing independently of consciousness, with Spinoza again as a major common source. On Spinoza, in the context of the continuum as causality, see Einstein's introduction to R. Kayser, *Spinoza, Portrait of a Spiritual Hero*.

21. See in particular Einstein's comments on Maxwell cited earlier, where Einstein suggests that "[Physicists] would then [after dissatisfaction with quantum mechanics] be brought to the attempts to realize that programme which can

suitably be called Maxwell's: the description of Physical Reality by fields which satisfy without singularity [that is, absolutely continuous fields] a set of partial differential equations" (*James Clerk Maxwell*, 66). Pais correctly describes this programme as "uniquely Einstein's" ("*Subtle is the Lord . . .*," 463). Pais's books offer excellent accounts of Einstein's debates with both Bohr and Born, although the Einstein-Born correspondence remains perhaps the best source (*The Born-Einstein Letters*).

22. AHQP, "Interview with Professor Niels Bohr, conducted by Thomas Kuhn (November 17, 1962), transcript, p. 3. Bohr, in this context, stresses the revolutionary significance of complementarity (3).

23. There would be an enormous difference in their attitude toward mathematical formalism, which Einstein had come to admire so much and which, as shall be seen, was one of Hegel's major targets.

24. In recent *history*, this complementary interplay is interestingly reflected in and between Foucault's various projects, arguably the single most important force on the current scene of historical analysis. This interplay is reflected in the oscillations between a more "historical," or more causal, and a more "geographical," or in Foucault's own terms cartographical, orientation within and between his various investigations, as well as in his many attempts to avoid the pitfalls of classical historicisms that emerge when either line of inquiry is privileged over another.

25. It is worth noting that "dark matter," which combines thermodynamic, gravitational, and quantum mechanical features, is itself a potential source of even more complex metaphors of the type considered at the moment.

26. See Pais's discussion in "*Subtle is the Lord . . .*" (93–100).

27. Proust had, of course, an immense impact on the French landscape at issue in the present study. He was in turn influenced by developments in modern physics, specifically relativity, but also by thermodynamics and by earlier ideas in atomic theory prior to quantum mechanics.

28. Spinoza even refused to exchange his profession for the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg, although his profession finally killed him by aggravating his consumption. His stated reason for declining the offer, however, was that it would inhibit his freedom of thought.

29. Optics was also one of Nietzsche's favorite, and powerfully employed, metaphoric *instruments*.

30. Bohm's own interpretation of complementarity is in effect Hegelian, and also Parmenidean, insofar as it derives from quantum conditions "the indivisible unity of the world" (*Quantum Theory*, 161–62).

31. His footnote—an acknowledgment really—in the preface to *The Accursed Share* is of particular interest: "Here I must thank my friend Georges Ambrosino, research director of the X-Ray Laboratory, without whom I could not have constructed this book. Science is never the work of one man; it requires an exchange

of views, a joint effort. This book is also in large part the work of Ambrosino. I personally regret that the atomic research in which he participates has removed him, for a time, from research in 'general economy.' I must express the hope that he will resume in particular the study he has begun with me of the movements of energy on the surface of the globe" (*The Accursed Share*, 191 n. 2; *La Part maudite*, 54 n. 1).

32. The term "postmodern physics" has actually been introduced in the field of physics itself by Yoichiro Nambu, who has made a number of momentous contributions to the most recent—"postmodern"—developments, such as "chromodynamics," a theory describing the interaction between quarks, and "string theory," potentially a description of "everything." Nambu's usage refers, in postmodern or poststructuralist fashion, to a more complex—as contrasted to all previous physics—mediation between mathematical concepts and experimental data. Bohr's complementarity, however, already suggests the irreducibility of this mediation, which, as opposed to Einstein, for example, is free from any nostalgia for the lost unity of physics and mathematics, physics and reality. In this sense Bohr's views are already markedly postmodern.

33. See his "Newton, Quantum Theory, and Reality," in *Three Hundred Years of Gravitation*.

## Chapter 2. Connectivities

1. Riemann develops this theory in his first published work, which was also his doctoral dissertation (1851). Riemann's collected works are published in *Gesammelte Mathematische Werke und Wissenschaftliche Nachlass*, *The Collected Works of Bernhard Riemann*. Riemann's theory deals with the problem of multivaluedness of the functions or variables of imaginary and complex numbers, such as the square root of  $-1$ . In this case, as opposed to the mathematics of real numbers, standard mathematical operations cannot be well defined because, in principle, more than one variable can correspond to a given value. Such operations become essentially ambiguous, double- or multivalued. To use Folse's formulation, "In order to avoid the ambiguity involved in knowing which value of the multivalued function is being considered, Riemann mapped these different variables onto different planes, each plane representing a different set of values of a single valued function for each value of the independent variable" (*The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*, 52).

Generally speaking, Riemann thus suggests avoiding the multivaluedness or ambiguity resulting in a given operation by separating or demarcating the "planes" of such results so that on each plane ambiguity disappears and one can engage a standard analysis there, although indeterminacy remains in the choice of the planes themselves. As this formulation suggests, the configuration is easily

generalized or used as a metaphor, as, for example, in young Bohr's "planes of objectivity," relating to the problem—the Hegelian problem—of self-consciousness. Similarly, in quantum mechanics one can see electrons either as particles or waves, or measure with unlimited precision either their coordinates or their momentum, but never do both at once, although within certain experimental and theoretical, or metaphorical, limits, the electron may be conceived as both particle and wave, or can be assigned both coordinates and momentum.

2. Although there are also complex Riemann manifolds, one deals, specifically in Einstein's theory, with variables and manifolds defined by real numbers, representing in fact an actual—real—space-time in which such events as the propagation of light take place. This work was actually developed by Riemann in 1854 in conjunction with other work on mathematical physics. At the time of his death, Riemann was working on a unified explanation of gravitation and light, which is part of Einstein's theory of general relativity, achieved by means of Riemann's theory of manifolds. Riemann's last writings are quite similar in spirit to Einstein's philosophy of physics.

For the genesis of general relativity and its relations to Riemann's geometry, see Pais's *"Subtle is the Lord . . ."* (177–291), one of the best historical accounts of the issue; others are available, of course, including several by Einstein himself. Bachelard's work has been extremely fruitful for our understanding of the history of the relationships between physics and geometry, and specifically of the crucial developments of non-Euclidean geometries in the nineteenth century, of which Riemann's geometry was one.

3. See also earlier comments (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 32; *Mille Plateaux*, 45–46). The entire analysis in chapter 14, "1440: The Smooth and The Striated," particularly in the sections "The Mathematical Model," dealing with Riemann manifolds, and "The Physical Model," also clearly influenced by Riemann's ideas, is relevant here (482–92). In accepted mathematical terms, 'multiplicité' here should be rendered into English as 'manifold'; but then this change might rhetorically diminish the emphasis on the multiple, which is crucial to Deleuze and Guattari's argument, although 'manifold' may yet prove a better, and fresher, English term. The German noun which Riemann used is *Mannigfaltigkeit*—manifoldness, diversity.

Immediately preceding their elaborations on Riemannian "multiplicités" (32), Deleuze and Guattari use another metaphor from modern physics, this time against Lacan: "Physicists say that holes are not the absence of particles but particles traveling faster than the speed of light" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 32; *Mille Plateaux*, 45). The usage is loose and somewhat obscure, perhaps in accord with the economy of writing at issue in their works, which their own writing aims to incorporate. In general, their work engages, conceptually and metaphorically, a huge array of modern mathematical and scientific ideas—catastrophe theory,

fractals and chaos theory, black holes, information theory, much of modern biology, and so forth—a characteristic that lends strength and appeal to their books. Quantum physics is, in fact, somewhat of an exception in this respect; at least in metaphorical terms, they appear to have a rather negative attitude toward undecidability as well. Marginalizing both theories is interesting but also consistent with the kind of model or set of models they employ and the economy which emerges as a result. Their rhizome economy must in fact be contrasted to the general economy and complementarity of the present study.

4. The English translation is from *A Thousand Plateaus* (485).

5. Derrida is also referred to, positively, on several occasions in *Anti-Oedipus*.

6. The point suggests potential connections to Husserl's investigations in "The Origin of Geometry" and *The Crisis of European Science*, or related thematics, particularly in Kant or Hegel himself, or in Heidegger's post-Husserlian investigations or Derrida's Introduction to Husserl's essay, *L'Origine de la géométrie*; Edmund Husserl's "Origin of Geometry": An Introduction. Similarly to Heidegger in *What is a Thing?*, Husserl sees Galilean geometry as having central and exemplary significance (*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, 353). Galilean "geometry" is, of course, a starting point of both special and general relativity, as Einstein moved from Euclidean geometry, "received," according to Husserl, by Galileo from Euclidean mathematics, to the non-Euclidean geometry that Einstein himself "receives" from Riemann. As Derrida's analysis, in his Introduction to "The Origin of Geometry" and elsewhere, shows, the economy of all these derivations must be very different from Husserl's, especially insofar as the latter assigns the fundamentally philosophical origin to geometry.

7. These connections are also important in the context of the question of spatialization and cartographic thematics that has had great prominence in recent discussions. This interest was in great measure stimulated by both Deleuze and Guattari, along with Foucault, who sees himself, at least at a certain stage of his career, as a cartographer. This cartographic-topological thematics is central to *A Thousand Plateaus*. In "The Smooth and the Striated," their discussion of "The Maritime Model" (478–82) features prominently, in part via Paul Virilio's theories (480), which are a major frame of reference in the book and in all their work, contributing to the spatial determination of the economy, both in its effective and its problematic aspects.

The cartographic connections themselves are, of course, logical: the rhizome economy may be defined as Riemannian cartography—a manifold of mapping and transitions, neither a single or total map, nor finally lacking totality or global connectivity. A rhizome *connects*. Connectivity, after all, is its fundamental and defining feature. The specific—more horizontal, less hierarchical—economy im-

plied by the corresponding metaphor does transform preceding classical models, but never as radically as do the metaphors which a general economy must employ.

In the chapter "The New Cartographer" in Deleuze's *Foucault*, the Riemannian thematics reemerges (13), implicitly playing a central role there and later in the book, whose second part is entitled "Topology." Deleuze offers a cogent analysis of Foucault's cartographic practices, again, with many proximities to the analysis in *A Thousand Plateaus*, specifically via Riemann manifolds and other scientific models developed there. Again, Deleuze and Guattari invoke neither "indeterminate" or "undecidable" maps nor the undecidability of mapping itself—the undecidability and complementarity of mapping and nonmapping. These omissions are consistent with their theoretical, ideological, and political economy, which in the end is restricted; and one needs very different mathematical and physical models from theirs. These models are always classical, whether one speaks in terms of mathematical—such as Riemann manifolds, physical, or philosophical and political models.

Both Bohr's complementarity and, differently, Gödel's undecidability and incompleteness suggest much more effective metaphors. Although Lyotard's economy in *The Postmodern Condition* is not radical enough either, in part by not being complementary, he effectively speaks of such indeterminacy of maps in the context of quantum mechanics and via Jorge Luis Borges (*The Postmodern Condition*, 55).

8. Catastrophe theory, by definition, addresses the question of discontinuities and singularities, and suggests corresponding metaphors. However effective such economies may be, Deleuze and Guattari do not consider them. Like many other postmodern or poststructuralist writers, Lyotard does refer to both fractals and catastrophe theory in *The Postmodern Condition*, although in his case, as with Gödel's undecidability and quantum theory, they shift Lyotard's economy too much toward discontinuity.

9. To a degree, as has been pointed out by a number of scientists and commentators alike, the very label "chaos theory" is somewhat of a misnomer for describing the behavior of the non-linear dynamic systems at issue. It might just as well be called the "order theory" or, as Ilya Prigogine would have it, the "order out of chaos" theory.

Katherine N. Hayles's remarks on the difference between Mitchell Feigenbaum and Derrida in *Chaos Bound* (183–84), are indicative of the difference, suggested here, between introducing chaos into order and introducing order into chaos, or producing order out of chaos. This difference is, I think, more decisive than their similarities, and it is also more radical than Hayles's analysis appears to suggest, although the similarities cannot of course be ignored. Hayles's analysis of deconstruction and related developments tends to avoid or perhaps repress their more

radically dislocating—general economic—dimensions, in part possibly again by virtue of the paradigm she pursues; and this analysis is not always fully rigorous in general. It often slides into a gloss of Derrida's or Foucault's ideas, which does not allow for a rigorous distinction between different models and paradigms that are employed or, conversely, emerge in the process. The very title—"chaos bound"—and subtitle—"orderly disorder"—of the book are again indicative of the gradient of many of its agendas—theoretical, ideological, or political. A similar asymmetry, privileging order, can be detected in Hayles's comments on modern or postmodern physics throughout. She does not really consider the irreducible indeterminacy—the irreducible chaos, or better, neither order nor chaos—characterizing all quantum theories, in short on the general economic nature of modern, or postmodern physics and complementarity as discussed here. Hayles's emphasis and priority throughout is on the "order" component of modern theories, which is cogent insofar as the role of chaos theory is concerned, and should not in turn be suppressed, but which must be made a part of the complementary economy. As *general economies*, both deconstruction or quantum complementarity present, thus, a spectrum of theoretical and metaphoric models or paradigms quite different from chaos theory, particularly if one extends them to the theoretical aspects of the humanities and social sciences, or to the study of history and culture.

This criticism may actually be extended to the economy of relationships between different fields as well, which is never analyzed sufficiently interactively in Hayles's book. Such complementary interactions may in fact be more effectively engaged even within a more restricted, in either sense, economy of the chaos theory paradigm. In this respect, one may juxtapose deconstruction, particularly Derrida's, and several related poststructuralist developments to the views Hayles advances; to a considerable degree, the latter, and a number of similar approaches via chaos theory, may be said to conform to a restricted economy and, as such, become deconstructable.

It may be pointed out that the radical, general economic implications of quantum mechanics are neither derived nor explored in Hayles's previous book, *The Cosmic Web: Scientific Models and Literary Strategies in the 20th Century*, where she discusses quantum mechanics, relativity, and modern mathematics, although she correctly stresses the difference between Bohr's and Heisenberg's interpretations in her summary of these developments and some of their conceptual implications (31–62). Throughout this discussion and throughout the book, however, the analysis firmly remains within classical limits. As in *Chaos Bound*, this approach may be cogent for some literary works considered by the book, but it bypasses the more radical theoretical and metaphoric possibilities and implications of modern science.



10. See, particularly, the powerful invocation of historical discontinuity via Marx in *Anti-Oedipus* (140).

11. See again, in particular, their initial elaboration on Riemann in *A Thousand Plateaus* (32–33).

12. See most specifically Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique; Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, where many of the themes under discussion continually reemerge. Spinoza is a decisive presence throughout Deleuze's work. Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers speak of Einstein's initial cosmological work as a "static, timeless view of the universe, Spinoza's vision translated into physics" (*Order Out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature*, 215).

They also suggest, not altogether correctly, that Einstein showed little, if any, interest in a more "historical" description of cosmic evolution" (215). Einstein regarded, or at least came to regard, Alexander Friedmann's evolutionary model in particular very highly. At issue in both Einstein's and Deleuze's cases is more a preference for *continuous* geometrical—Riemannian—models, which may be more dynamic and historical, transformational, and to which Alexander Friedmann's and Georges Lemaître's alternative models invoked by Prigogine and Stengers (215) conform as well. What did bother Einstein about "historical" models and other implications of his own general relativity were discontinuities, singularities, such as the initial singularity—the big bang—black holes, and the like, inherent in his gravity equations. The issue has been the subject of much debate in recent physics concerning black holes, the early universe, and related issues, specifically in and in relation to Stephen Hawking's, or again Roger Penrose's, work. See Hawking's comments in "Quantum Cosmology" (*Three Hundred Years of Gravitation*, 631–33, 645–51); for a popular exposition, see his *A Brief History of Time: From The Big Bang to Black Holes*.

13. A reference to Bergson is of particular interest, beyond its obvious pertinence (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 483–86, 573 n. 16). Bergson had a keen interest in Einstein's theory from very early on. Einstein himself, while he is reported to have come "to know, like, and respect Bergson, . . . of Bergson's philosophy used to say, 'Gott verzeih ihm,' God forgive him" (quoted by Pais, "*Subtle is the Lord . . .*," 510). Bergson, of course, is a crucial reference throughout Deleuze's work, and he may be seen as another historical and theoretical correlative to both Spinoza and Einstein in positioning the Deleuzian vision. See, for example, his earlier *Le Bergsonisme (Bergsonism)*; but there are many crucial Bergsonian references and junctures throughout Deleuze.

That Bergson can be seen as much more important than Husserl (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 483) is of considerable interest, particularly insofar as Husserl pursues a temporality very different from Bergson's duration, or Alfred North Whitehead's Bergsonian process-continuum, as developed, for example, in *Process and Reality*.

I simplify the case for the moment; Husserl's own economy—the economy, in the shadow of Hegel, of consciousness and continuity—is fundamentally problematic and remains, as Derrida demonstrates, a paradigmatic and paradigmatically deconstructable example of the metaphysics of presence. Deleuze does acknowledge Husserl's role in the history of “multiplicities” at issue here more specifically in *Foucault* (13).

Although, or because, he was a student of Hyppolite, to whom his first book, *Empiricism et subjectivité*, was dedicated, Deleuze does not similarly credit Hegel, despite Hegel's being no less a philosopher of multiplicity, certainly, than Husserl. Heidegger, with his complex analysis of spatiality and temporality, again stressing the temporal, is another important reference here. Deleuze's “rejection” is not unrelated to the present concerns, although it does have other reasons as well. See his comments in Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues* (12–19).

14. Earlier they also speak of “a Riemann abstract machine,” which, as an *abstract* machine, is the same machine. They also speak of “a Galois abstract machine” in algebra (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 142). The latter may actually also be constructed as a kind of geometric machine, both in their sense and in more rigorously mathematical terms as an algebraic geometric machine. Algebraic geometry is a branch of modern mathematics to which Riemann also made major contributions. These areas of mathematics are also connected to recent developments in modern or again postmodern physics.

15. Deleuze and Guattari's discussion in “The Aesthetic Model: Nomad Art” (492–500) does have interesting intersections with Derrida's analysis of the history of writing in *Of Grammatology* and related texts, with André Leroi-Gourhan's work as the main common reference (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 574 n. 33, and *Of Grammatology*, 84).

16. See, for example, *Anti-Oedipus*, 126.

17. Heidegger et “les juifs,” 28–29, also 120; Heidegger and “the jews,” 11–12, also 73. I shall consider the question of the general model of force at issue in Lyotard's remarks in the discussion of Hegel on force in Chapter 4.

18. Hilbert, along with Einstein, is credited as the discoverer of the mathematical equations of general relativity. The complexities of this history include competing claims of authorship. See Pais's discussion (“*Subtle is the Lord . . .*,” 257–61). In this context, one should also mention Herman Weyl, who made major contributions to both general relativity and quantum mechanics. It is worth noting that his famous book on general relativity, *Raum-Zeit-Materie* (1918), opens with a discussion of Brentano's phenomenology.

19. His *Grundlagen der Geometrie* appeared in 1899. Here, as shall be seen, Georg Cantor's role was also decisive, which would further confirm the point under discussion.

20. I refer here in particular to her “La ‘Mécanique’ des fluides” (“The

‘Mechanics’ of Fluids”) in *Ce Sexe qui n’en est pas un* (*The Sex Which is Not One*), the essay originally published in 1974. At issue here is, of course, a complex, extremely indirect, and very loose, metaphoric play; therefore, one has to be cautious not to push the textual evidence too far by claiming too strong an interrelation or intertextual influence.

Similarly, and possibly again in proximity to Deleuze and Foucault, Irigaray is here once more using classical theory. Further, leaving aside the intricate and somewhat tenuous question of establishing direct mathematical and scientific connections, a more important point may well be that, as in Deleuze, the matrix of Irigaray’s analysis is, from the present perspective, not sufficiently general economic and complementary. Very complex economies are at stake, however. It may be that even the general economy is not radical enough to approach the question of sexual and gender difference or the complementarity of such differences, assuming that these terms still apply in these domains, and a new theory will become necessary.

21. Derrida’s analysis—and *deconstruction*—of Lacan’s seminar on Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Purloined Letter” in *The Post Card*, together with related points in Derrida’s other texts, is effective, especially in regard to what Derrida sees as a transcendental signifier in Lacan, in proximity to and in a reversal of Heidegger’s economy of the transcendental signified (*Of Grammatology*, 19–20). Derrida shows that Lacan’s signifier functions as the transcendental signified found behind every other signifier and signified. Other Lacanian texts may provide a degree of counterargument to Derrida, perhaps particularly the discussion of the Real in *Le Seminaire de Jacques Lacan XI* (*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*), on which I shall comment later in this study. The issue is complex, and a rigorous treatment would demand a prolonged textual analysis of Lacan that cannot be pursued here.

22. One can also mention, at this juncture, Roman Jakobson’s related idea of metaphoric and metonymic axes of organization, which had a powerful influence on Lacan, and via Lacan, on Althusser. To amplify further some of Jakobson’s best ideas, it is clear that one would need a complementarity of metaphor and metonymy, rather than their opposition.

23. The historical proximity of the emergence of quantum mechanics, particularly of uncertainty relations (1927) and Gödel’s results (1931) is of some interest, even though both results have independent histories within their fields. Gödel’s results, however, suggest a kind of ultimate uncertainty about physics, since the latter depends on mathematics. At the very least in terms of metaphoric implications, the major value of both theories is the possibility of developing workable theoretical frameworks under the conditions of indeterminacy and undecidability, and of course in exploring such conditions.

Both Husserl and Heidegger, in commenting on Gödel’s results and on quan-

tum mechanics, do not see them as undermining, or even relevant to, the task of thinking. The value of these results in their respective fields are not dismissed by either of them. Rather, both see the crisis of modern science along much more general lines, whereby modern science would be criticized as deviating toward technical forms of knowledge.

For Heidegger, this crisis is in fact already announced by and represented in Nietzsche's writing, which is of course not scientific but which responds to the same crisis of thinking. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche's writing is one of the principal symptoms of this crisis, an assessment that is also correct, with an all-important difference in the emerging hierarchy of values—in Nietzsche as against Heidegger. It is not, of course, that Nietzsche would settle for, or even approve, "technical" knowledge. He went further; namely, he destroyed the possibility of maintaining unequivocally all differences of that kind, thus effectively suggesting the complementary matrix. Nietzsche would even see philosophy itself as the longstanding crisis of European science [Wissenschaft]—"the longest error."

Contrary to both Husserl and Heidegger, however, the scientific and mathematical results at issue appear to have great relevance, metaphorically and otherwise, particularly as far as Gödel's undecidables are concerned, in deconstruction, on which Heidegger's own impact was itself extraordinarily powerful. I would see the Nietzschean dimensions of deconstruction as the most powerful.

24. Gödel, incidentally, also made major contributions to the mathematical problem of the continuum, posed by Georg Cantor, and, while Einstein's colleague at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, produced some interesting results in Einstein's theory of general relativity, which was the culmination of the continuum in the field of physics.

25. I refer to Paul de Man's tropes, introduced in "The Rhetoric of Temporality" (in *Blindness and Insight*) and variously developed throughout his subsequent work. Irony relates more to a radical discontinuity and rupture, whereas allegory may be seen as a more continuous trope than irony, although less so than symbol, as delineated by de Man in the essay. In fact, one finds in de Man's rhetoric of temporality more complementary engagements of continuity and discontinuity, although the overall economy would not be that of complementarity and general economy, on which the present study is based. The statement at issue, however, may be placed in a deManian context, both in relation to his matrix of allegory and irony as the rhetoric of temporality, via Nietzsche, and, interactively, to his discussion of Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*. Such a placement also suggests another interesting angle—the continuum angle—on Hegel's theory of symbol in the *Aesthetics*. See de Man's essay, "Hegel On the Sublime."

It is worth noting that de Man initially studied science and engineering in the 1930s; thus he must have had considerable familiarity with the issues of quantum mechanics, even beyond the fact that the field was at that time a widely discussed

topic. The complex interplay of the continuous and discontinuous, spatial and temporal, causal and noncausal, and so forth in de Man's tropes may reflect the influence of the modern history of science, although such sources, as, first of all, Hölderlin, Rousseau, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Proust, and in later works Derrida, are likely to be more decisive. In any event, complementarity as the general economy of transformations, and particularly the complementarity of continuities and breaks, can be interestingly related to de Man's conjunction of allegory and irony, especially insofar as one refigures it as complementarity—at times one, at times another, at times simultaneously, at times by way of mutual inhibition without synthesis, at times engaging synthesis.

26. Hegel's analysis of the interactions between the continuous and the discontinuous is rich and diverse, exploring various facets of both in mathematics, physics, and philosophy. Thus, as Bertrand Russell points out, Hegel's notions of continuity and discontinuity as used in relation to the definition of numbers are quite different from the ideas of differential calculus explored elsewhere in the first *Logic*; they are much closer to modern formal logic (*The Principles of Mathematics*, 157).

See also Thomas Pinkard's discussion of Russell and Hegel in "Hegel's Philosophy of Mathematics" (*Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 459). Pinkard stresses, correctly, the significance of the relationships between Hegel's notion of infinity—and its continuum, extensive and intensive—and Lagrange's ideas, which Hegel juxtaposes to Newton's interpretation of differential calculus and which can be further juxtaposed to some later theories of the infinite, such as that of Weierstrass (463).

27. K. F. Bloch's *Die Atomistik bei Hegel und die Atomtheorie der Physik* is useful in locating relevant elaborations in Hegel's text, particularly on the philosophical history of atomism and on the question of continuity and discreteness (46–51, 53–55). The analysis itself is rather skimpy. Bohr and complementarity are not considered, although, interestingly, the book refers to Høffding on several occasions. Most references to modern physics are to Heisenberg and some cosmological theories prior to 1979.

28. In making this statement, I do not mean to imply that Hegel deals only with this issue, either in *Logic* or elsewhere, but simply that the underlying logic is always the logic of continuity, indeed, a self-conscious and historical continuity.

29. Obviously, the related discussions in the second *Logic* (*Encyclopedia*, secs. 98–109) and *The Philosophy of Nature* in the *Encyclopedia* are equally relevant. What is of primary interest here is, of course, not Hegel's mathematics, physics, or astronomy, but what Hegel has to say about the conditions of possibility of mathematical or physical concepts, such as continuity and discontinuity, spatialization and temporalization, force and difference of forces, and so forth.

30. It is interesting and important—and logical, indeed inevitable—that in his

recent manifesto on the current state of physics, "Information, Physics, Quantum: The Search for Links," John Archibald Wheeler suspends, most directly, the "continuum"—"[Third No] No continuum"—and more indirectly, "consciousness" (*Complexity, Entropy, and the Physics of Information*, 9–10, 15–16).

31. His analysis of atomism in the second *Logic* and in the *History of Philosophy* is quite relevant in this context as well.

32. I do not want to oversimplify these matters in Descartes or Kant; and the question of Hegel's relations to Fichte and Schelling and other authors of the post-Kantian period is still more complex in this respect. Hegel's contribution and his transformation of the landscape of intellectual history remain decisive, however. In the present context, Hegel's transformation of Spinoza and, differently, of Leibniz and Kant, must be seen as moving the economy of logic away from the static and toward the dynamic, historical, and self-conscious continuum. In this sense, Hegel, a great Heraclitean, enacts a radical move away from many a preceding metaphysics and, in a certain fashion, away from Euclidean thinking, even though he finally reinstates the metaphysics by virtue of, interactively, continuity and self-consciousness. As I have indicated, this question of the relationship between the static and the dynamic model played a major role in modern physics and cosmology, beginning with Einstein's first modern cosmological model—a Spinozist model.

33. See also a similar remark in his "Introductory Survey" (1929) (*ATDN*, 15–16).

34. See Murdoch's discussion in *Niels Bohr's Philosophy of Physics* (97–99).

35. See "Theoretische Überlegungen zum Wesen des Psychischen," in C. G. Jung, *Gesammelte Werke*, b. 8, 253–61, where in fact some formulations are supplied by Pauli (255–56). Earlier in the work, in general filled with connections to modern physics, Jung invokes, via a work by C. A. Meyer, Bohr's correspondence principle as well (215), on which I shall comment later in this chapter.

One can suggest that Jungian "complementarity" was shaped by Pauli's much more metaphysical, or positivist, views, as against Bohr's; and references to Pauli are scattered throughout Jung's work. But what grounds Jungian complementarity most decisively is Jungian psychology, which may have in turn influenced Pauli's views. Pauli's comments, in Jung's essay, on the difference between quantum mechanics and psychology are interesting in suggesting, by analogy with the theory of measurement in quantum mechanics, the impossibility of an unconditional demarcation—or "cut"—between consciousness and the unconscious. As I indicated, it is conceivable that these ideas influenced Freud's later writings as well.

36. Cited by Folse (*The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*, 53–55), to whose book I am indebted for the historical data under discussion.

37. See Derrida's analysis in *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, 118–23.

38. Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Complete Translation of the Fragments in Diels, Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 104; cited by Folse (*The Philosophy of Niels Bohr*, 55).

39. "Incommensurability" is also a very apt term, including in relation to modern science and the history of science. It is a central term for, among many others, both Kuhn and Feyerabend; and as I have indicated earlier, Feyerabend's economy of incommensurability, in particular, can be productively related to the radical alterity and general economy as considered here. For some relevant and useful connections between incommensurability in Anglo-American philosophy and otherness in Levinas and Derrida, see Richard J. Bernstein, "Incommensurability and Otherness Revisited," *The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity-Postmodernity* (57–78). I find the overall framework of Bernstein's analysis problematic; and, in spite of Bernstein's claims to the contrary, his claims and, mostly Habermasian, agendas cannot, I think, productively interact with Derrida's discourse, at least its most radical and most general economic aspects, which are in fact not considered by Bernstein.

40. Murray Gell-Mann's borrowing the term "quark" from Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* partly reflects this sense. Gell-Mann also introduced another *strange* term—"strangeness," resulting in "strange quarks."

41. This is the central theoretical and historical part of the project of *Of Grammatology*. See in particular pp. 24–26, 85–86, 286, and many other elaborations of this topic, as well as Derrida's discussions in *Positions*, *Margins*, and other works, some of which will be considered in more detail later in this study.

### Chapter 3. Landscapes

1. The German reads: "Es erfordert keinen grossen Aufwand von Witz, den Satz, daß Sein und Nichts dasselbe ist, lächerlich zu machen oder vielmehr Ungereimtheiten vorzubringen mit der unwahren Versicherung, dass sie Konsequenzen und Anwendungen jenes Satzes seien" (*Werke* 8:188–89; *Hegel's Logic*, 129).

2. In this sense the first *Logic* and the late *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* are of particular interest throughout, although the issue is addressed to a greater or lesser extent in all Hegel's prefaces and introductions, and throughout his texts.

3. The German text is as follows: "Das Schlußkapitel der vorliegenden Schrift, die Auseinandersetzung mit der *hegel'schen Dialektik* und Philosophie überhaupt, hielt ich für durchaus nothwendig, da von den *kritischen Theologen* unserer Zeit eine solche Arbeit nicht nur nicht vollbracht, sondern nicht einmal ihre Nothwendigkeit erkannt worden ist—eine nothwendige *Ungründlichkeit*, da selbst der *kritische Theologe Theologe* bleibt" ["Ökonomisch-philosophische

Manuskripte,” Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA), Erste Abteilung, 2:326].

4. The configuration will also engage complex psychological dimensions, of course: complex Oedipal politics—for example, but not exclusively, Harold Bloom’s “anxiety of influence.”

5. See Derrida’s remarks on reading Heidegger’s own reading of Nietzsche (*Of Grammatology*, 19–20).

6. See in particular Bataille’s discussion in *Inner Experience* (108–11) “Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice,” and *The Accursed Share* 3: “Sovereignty.”

7. I truncate Derrida’s long paragraph, which also contains an extraordinary reading of Bataille’s laughter as itself a general economic sovereign moment and, in proximity to Derrida’s own general economy of *différance*, a demonstration of the complexity of the relationships between Hegel’s lordship [Herrschaft] and Bataille’s sovereignty, and thus between restricted and general economy.

8. Naturally, there is also a very distinguished German history of reading Hegel—directly or obliquely or both—by every major philosophical figure, most specifically Heidegger and the representatives of the Frankfurt school, or Marxist Hegelians, or Hegelian Marxists, such as Lukács and Marcuse, and Hegelian scholarship, in recent history most significantly Dieter Henrich’s. This history has had and continues to have a powerful effect upon the French landscape.

At issue in the present context are more the encounters and confrontations that have shaped modern and postmodern, or poststructuralist, intellectual history, with Hegel’s own confrontation with himself remaining a central one. In this context, beyond the obvious, and obviously irreducible, impact of Heidegger and differently of Freud and Nietzsche, the work and relation to Hegel of such figures as Benjamin, Adorno, and Habermas have played a decisive role. For Habermas, Hegel represents the central figure of modernity. In this sense, while Nietzsche continues to be seen as a decisive, revolutionary event, the whole confrontation between Lyotard and Habermas and related debates around the question of postmodernism and the major French figures—Lacan, Deleuze, Foucault, Derrida—still proceed in the shadow of Hegel, and indeed the double shadow of Hegel and Kant. Kant, particularly Kant on the sublime, has been a major point of departure for Lyotard. Lyotard, in my view, overstates the case, in seeing in Kant’s economy of the sublime a major anticipation of both Nietzsche and Freud. Paul de Man’s later essays on Kant and Hegel, particularly “Hegel on the Sublime” (*Displacement: Derrida and After*), acquire an additional interest in this context, partly again in conjunction with de Man’s many approaches to Nietzsche, Hölderlin, and the question of temporality. The major texts at issue, and the by now numerous or innumerable commentaries, are well known. I have considered some of them and the issue in general in a separate study, *Reconfigurations: Critical Theory and General Economy*.



9. Beyond Derrida's own work, I refer here to the well-known commentaries by such authors as de Man, Lacoue-Labarthe, Nancy, Hamacher, particularly his work on early Hegel, "*pleroma*—zu Genesis und Struktur einer dialektischen Hermeneutik bei Hegel" (in Hegel, *Der Geist des Christentums*), and several other authors. Among the recent commentaries in this country on or within the orbit of deconstruction, specifically engaging Hegelian problematics, are Rodolphe Gasché, *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection*; Steven Melville, *Philosophy Beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism*; and, along more deManian, or post-deManian, lines of reading, Andrzej Warminski's *Reading and Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger*, although these studies do not consider in any detail or significance, if at all, the question of history and, as most other recent commentaries, bypass the major themes of the present study—particularly general economy and the question of closure.

Gasché's cogent and valid critique of reflexivity in Hegel (1–9) and his analysis in general are contained, deliberately and to a degree problematically, within the philosophical register. Warminski's book offers suggestive explorations—readings—but is not really concerned with history and, at times problematically, bypasses the unconscious and general economic margins of both Hegel's and Heidegger's texts or philosophy in general.

Melville's book is somewhat closer to the present study, in view of its discussion of psychoanalytic thematics, and Bataille (71–83); its concerns are elsewhere, however, as the title suggests, most specifically with the problematics of modernist criticism, finally, I think, shifting the center of the whole discussion toward de Man. While Melville's discussion of Bataille and his invocation of general economy are pertinent, the book does not rigorously relate Derrida's and Bataille's analyses, either textually or conceptually. Nor does it fully consider the general economy itself—whether as the economy of loss or as the economy of multiplicity, particularly in Derrida. In fact, I do not believe the very term 'general economy' is considered by Melville in relation to Derrida's matrix.

Another recent study of Hegelian, or post-Hegelian, landscapes, Walter Davis's *Inwardness and Existence: Subjectivity in/and Hegel, Heidegger, Marx and Freud*, while devoting considerable space to Hegel, on the one hand, and, on the other, some space to the question of history elsewhere in the book, particularly in its discussion of Marxism, considers the question of history in Hegel only in passing (44–45), actually reducing the economy of history in Hegel by appropriating it to more subjectivist and existential concerns. Proceeding via Hegel, Marx, and Freud, and a certain existential thematics, the book pursues an economy of the subject as a potential alternative to Derrida's matrix and other post-structuralist theories. The economy suggested by the book, however, is a restricted economy. Indeed it reinstates many dimensions of subjectivity deconstructable by what are by now standard Derridean techniques.

This insistence on the existential subject, ethical subject, political subject, or subjectivity in the first place has in fact been a relatively common trend in recent discussions. It may proceed either by juxtaposing one's matrix to poststructuralist theories, or, more commonly in recent years, by reappropriating poststructuralist theories, and specifically Derrida and deconstruction, to the agenda of subjectivity. Such attempts, however, are never effective. It must, of course, be kept in mind that Derrida's analysis is by no means simply a dismissal of subjectivity, but is a kind of resituating or recomprehending of subjectivity, alongside a radical deconstruction of it. The problem of the recent recuperations of the subjective is, however, usually, and perhaps inevitably, a repression of the deconstructive aspects of the process, which is one of the reasons why they are not effective.

10. These questions have been the subject of much discussion in and around deconstruction. Derrida himself offers many elaborations. Perhaps the most pointed, certainly the most famous, ones occur in the section "The Exorbitant: The Question of Method," in *Of Grammatology*, 157–64. Outside Derrida's text, one should mention Gasché's work on Derrida and de Man, "Deconstruction as Criticism"; "'*Setzung*' and '*Übersetzung*': Notes on Paul de Man"; "Indifference to Philosophy: de Man on Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche"; and *The Tain of the Mirror* already referred to.

11. Irigaray's title and notion of "ce sexe qui n'en est pas un" may well be also an allusion, a very forceful and implicative one, to this last phrase "un savoir qui n'en est pas un."

12. See Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's opening remarks *La fiction du politique: Heidegger, l'art et la politique*; *Heidegger, Art and Politics*. See also Jean-Luc Nancy's Introduction in *Who Comes After the Subject?*

13. To the extent that this exploration demands complementarity, it suggests the relationships between complementary engagement and the indeterminacy and undecidability of theoretical propositions and structures. Metaphorically, undecidability and complementary indeterminacy interact and, to a degree, converge here. The difference and balance of interaction between them will be determined by way of specific theoretical projects or textual engagements, as indicated earlier.

14. I use the word 'reduction' with an eye on Husserl's "phenomenological reduction." There, among other things, what is at stake is, conversely, a possibility—equally problematic or impossible—of the nonlogical and the unconscious. Derrida's analysis in *Speech and Phenomena* is the best treatment of Husserl's case in this respect, and arguably in general, particularly in conjunction with other essays on Husserl, starting with his *Introduction* to "The Origins of Geometry" (Edmund Husserl's *L'Origine de la géométrie*; *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction*) and including "'Genesis and Structure' and Phenomenology" (in *Writing and Difference*), "Form and Meaning: A Note

on the Phenomenology of Language" (in *Margins*), and the recently published earlier work, *Le Problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*.

15. Here and throughout the present study, I shall, following Derrida, use the word 'proper' as combining various semantic fields—such as propriety, property, proper or authentic belonging, as in Heidegger's sense of the authentic [*eigentlich*], and, as shall be seen, several others, many of them already multiple, of course. Derrida's multiple usage, usually combining all such connotations, is enabled by a broader, in comparison to English, semantic field of the French word and historical usage of '*propre*' and related terms in French philosophical literature.

16. I shall consider these issues throughout the remainder of this study, most specifically in Chapter 5. It should be stressed briefly that Husserl's contribution was decisive, in part by virtue of the extraordinary rigor of his analysis of conscious temporality. The import of his contribution remains, even though, as Derrida's critique of Husserl demonstrates, his analysis remains within the classical limits and limitations determined by consciousness and presence. The classical analysis of temporality—whether in Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, or indeed Aristotle—retains its value, even though it must be deconstructed and re-comprehended via more "unconscious" or general economic frameworks, such as those of Nietzsche, Freud, Lacan, or Derrida. In the first place, as all major theorists of the unconscious understood, we do need a more rigorous analysis of consciousness, where we can still use many classical theories, and specifically Hegel, with great effectiveness. No less crucially, the classical texts are, in spite of and against themselves, major explorations to the problematic of the unconscious—for example, Kant on the sublime or Hegel on the dialectic of desire in the *Phenomenology*.

17. The statement opens "Who Thinks Abstractly? [Wer denkt abstrakt]?" (in *Hegel: Texts and Commentary*); cited by Heidegger in "What is Metaphysics?" (*Existence and Being*, 349).

18. The French reads: "Hegel, déjà, était pris à ce jeu . . . il a sans doute résumé la totalité de la philosophie du logos. Il a déterminé l'ontologie comme logique absolue; il a rassemblé toutes les délimitations de l'être comme présence" (*De la grammatologie*, 39). The English translation substitutes "philosophy" for "being" [*l'être*], which substitution may be of some interest in the context of the present discussion. See also *Speech and Phenomena*, 101–2.

19. One can argue for a closer proximity of Derrida to Heidegger, or conversely of Heidegger to Derrida, across longer trajectories of their discourses, although this proximity will be found to be more developed and pronounced in later Derrida, along with the development of Derrida's engagement with Heidegger's works and ideas. Heidegger's own text, of course, is equally complex and

heterogeneous in its genealogy, fluctuations, and transformations, both in the context of Derrida and on its own terms. This proximity to Heidegger can indeed be ascertained in Derrida. One certainly cannot deny the complexity—a kind of *différance*—of the interaction between Heidegger and Derrida, and the significance of Heidegger's "uncircumventable meditation [l'incontourable méditation]," for Derrida.

This significance has been correctly emphasized by Herman Rapaport's *Heidegger and Derrida: Reflections on Time and Language*. While the book points out the difference between Heidegger and Derrida and the dynamics of Derrida's thought in this respect, it does suffer, in my view, from a massive repression of the non-Heideggerian—specifically, the Nietzschean and the Freudian—dimensions of Derrida's text. Derrida, however, continues to maintain such non- or even contra-Heideggerian dimensions of his discourse throughout his work, earlier or later. In fact, they can readily be located in Derrida's most recent essays on Heidegger. Heidegger's thought never exceeds the metaphysics of presence, no matter how much—and in part precisely because—all such claims need to be qualified with respect to, on the one hand, the specific character of the economy of differences and transformations, and on the other, the possibility of such an excess and the question of the closure of metaphysics or the closure of presence. The differences between Heidegger and Derrida, therefore, must be maintained, particularly with respect to major determinations at issue in the present study—such as the question of presence and the metaphysics of presence, the question of closure, the relation to the unconscious, and general economy. Rapaport does not consider these issues in his study, whose overall perspective is, I think, much more Heideggerian than Derridean; and is particularly close to later Heidegger.

I would tend to agree more with Gasché, who in *The Tain of the Mirror* and his other writings on the issue, insists on fundamentally differentiating the Heideggerian and the Derridean frameworks, even within the philosophical register. It is true that Gasché's analysis of Heidegger is not sufficiently nuanced and he misses several, at times important, moments of closer proximity between Derrida and Heidegger, particularly the later Heidegger, which come into the foreground in Derrida's later writings.

The problem in Gasché's analysis occurs, in my view, at the opposite end of the spectrum, namely, in a too narrow confinement of Derrida's text and style within the philosophical register, even though the strategy is deliberate and, in view of uncritical earlier commentaries on Derrida, to a degree understandable. Gasché suspends the unconscious and the general economic dimensions of Derrida's text, particularly Nietzsche, Freud, and Bataille, whom Gasché mentions mostly in passing and in substance bypasses. Gasché, it is worth pointing out, has previously written extensively on Bataille, particularly, in *System und Metaphorik in*

*der Philosophie von Georges Bataille*, where similar attitudes can be detected, as is in fact suggested already by the title, demarcating Bataille's discourse as philosophy.

It may be true that the subject of Gasché's study is "Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection," and thus primarily the philosophical register in Derrida—a very important issue indeed. The suspension of the unconscious and general economy in Derrida however, is problematic even within the deliberately set limits of Gasché's analysis, however acute and useful in articulating the space of difference this analysis may be within these limits. The question, that is, is that of the possibility of such an absolute suspension of the non-philosophical in Derrida at *any* point, even though the reverse move of suspending the philosophical register of Derrida's discourse is, as we have seen, equally problematic.

Gasché's strategic, or perhaps ideological, choice is in my view unfortunate. His analysis covers much ground; the discussion of undecidability, for example, is very good, and for this thematics his demarcation is both cogent and effective. In general, however, one could question Gasché's demarcation, or at least the degree to which it is established; and in *The Tain of the Mirror*, particularly its conclusion, and his other essays, where a similar set of positions and agendas emerges, Gasché makes much broader claims concerning the positioning of Derrida and deconstruction, specifically in relation to literature, literary criticism, and theory. These claims are sometimes quite un-Derridean, and problematic in general, for the issue obviously extends beyond the problems of demarcating and stratifying Derrida's texts in this way. Gasché's treatment of the relationships between literary criticism and theory and deconstruction in *The Tain of the Mirror* tends to be equally narrow and to the detriment of his analysis. Derrida's comments on Gasché's book in a recent interview are indicative in this respect (*Acts of Literature*, 70–72).

20. See Derrida's important comments on the juncture of Hegel and Saussure in "The Pit and the Pyramid" (*Margins*, 72) and his discussion of the issue throughout *Positions*, particularly the remarks on p. 51.

21. It may be useful here to oppose "globalization" to "totalization," historically signaling unities far more problematic than Derrida's closure. In her Translator's Preface, Gayatri C. Spivak detects certain "totalizations" in early Derrida that were replaced by more subtle and complex attitudes in his subsequent works, an assessment that is, I think, correct, but that is not what I am referring to at the moment. On closure [clôture], which does not seem to undergo such a transformation during this or any subsequent period, Spivak comments, "We must know that we are *within* the 'clôture' of metaphysics, even as we attempt to undo it" (xx). Her claim, thus, corresponds to Derrida's position as considered here.

Spivak's Preface remains a fine general introduction in English to Derrida's works, particularly for the period it covers, even given the subsequent profusion of

explanations, elucidations, and introductions and the widespread absorption of Derrida's text and idiom. I would argue, however, that while Derrida does suspend the totalizing claims on which Spivak comments—largely even as his analysis in the book proceeds—the globalizing determinations suggested by the economy of the closure of philosophy persist throughout both Derrida's earlier and later texts.

22. One must, of course, differentiate Hegel and Heidegger. Heideggerian economy is closer to the economy of closure, and Derrida approaches the most fundamental structures of closure—the closure of metaphysics and the closure of presence—via Heidegger, even though, as was just indicated, in many ways Hegel “closes” the history of philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. In Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis at the opening of *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, the notion of closure also plays a very important role. It seems to have been conceived via both Derrida and Heidegger, although Lacoue-Labarthe makes overt reference only to Heidegger. Derrida, however, appears to differentiate his economy of closure from Heidegger's ideas concerning the functioning of metaphysics and philosophy. See in particular the conclusions to both “*Différance*” and “*Ousia and Grammē*,” and related remarks in *Of Grammatology*, *Positions*, and many other texts.

23. Naturally other names can be invoked and more complex stratifications can be engaged; in addition, the axes just suggested are not intended to map a historico-genealogical development of Derrida's discourse. One can perhaps suggest that Derrida, in pursuing his major philosophical interests, moves first from Husserl to Hegel—via Freud, Nietzsche, and Bataille—a development that culminates with *Glas* (1974), and then to Heidegger, via Blanchot and others. Rapaport may have a point in suggesting, in *Heidegger and Derrida*, that Blanchot, generally a more Heideggerian thinker, is a major mediating figure in this respect. One should be careful, however, not to linearize this progression too much even with respect to the main philosophical figures. The encounters with Levinas and Kant are of major significance to Derrida, and he continues to comment on all figures at issue throughout his works. In addition, these encounters serve as much to play out and to disseminate various dimensions of Derrida's own frameworks as to comment on these figures. In this sense, Derrida's style of commentary can be deceptive, which can also be said about Heideggerian commentary, especially in the works following *Being and Time*.

24. See also elaborations on the Medusa—on Hegel being the Medusa to himself, “congealing” himself—later in the book (*Glas*, 202, 282–83b). Bataille speaks of the revolution as a supereagle—a super-Hegel? (*Visions*, 34).

25. The inconclusive dates customarily given for writing the Ode are 1802–1804.

26. The quotation is in fact from the opening elaboration of Hegel's analysis on sense-certainty in “Consciousness” in the *Phenomenology*.

27. One must keep in mind that, as Derrida's essay reminds us, *Dasein* in Heidegger by no means denotes something like "common humanity," whatever that might be; yet it still remains inescapably human—"the name of man," the *thinking* being, in Heidegger's sense of thinking. The concept of thinking itself and, more generally, as Derrida argues, Heideggerian humanism become problematic as a result, however important their critical value may be with respect to other metaphysical economies of humanity and forms of humanism.

28. By human sciences, Derrida, at the time of this essay, refers most specifically to Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology and related developments in structuralism, which are Derrida's major topic in *Of Grammatology* and other early essays.

29. There has been a steady effort, initiated by Walter Kaufmann in his translations and commentary, to elucidate Nietzsche's work in the United States. It is roughly contemporaneous with the history of Nietzsche in France, although no match in scope or intellectual intensity to the French scene, which was further enhanced by powerful feminist encounters with Nietzsche in the works of such authors as Sarah Kofman, Luce Irigaray, and Hélène Cixous. Arthur Danto's *Nietzsche as Philosopher* appeared in 1965, roughly simultaneously with Deleuze's *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (1962), which can be seen as the opening of the history of "the new French Nietzsche," although preceding work by Bataille, Klossowski, and several others, and of course, Heidegger's encounter with Nietzsche, was crucial. The difference of "*as*" and "*and*" is itself not unsymptomatic, as follows from Danto's Introduction, in which he states that his major interest is what is *philosophical* in Nietzsche.

Danto's book was reissued by the Columbia University Press in 1980 along with the translation of Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in 1983, in the wake of the massive resurgence of interest in Nietzsche, notably including Foucault's Nietzsche, in France. This renewed re-vision of Nietzsche was a major influence on the American scene. De Man's several influential readings of Nietzsche and the translations of Derrida's work began to appear around 1970. David Allison edited, with an informed and intelligent introduction, *The New Nietzsche*, a collection of essays, mostly French, but also reflecting the history of reading Nietzsche in Germany, which were dated approximately between 1965 and 1975. See also Allison's fine essay on *The Birth of Tragedy*, "Nietzsche Knows No Noumenon" (in *Why Nietzsche Now?*). Allison also translated and introduced Derrida's *Speech and Phenomena*, his first major book, published in English in 1973.

Heidegger's lectures on Nietzsche started to appear in English in 1979 with *Nietzsche, Volume One: The Will to Power as Art*. The first full-scale study of Nietzsche in English outside deconstruction that attempted to react to modern, or postmodern, sensibilities and intellectual history was Alexander Nehamas's *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), although it remains too close to the Kaufmann-Danto orbit, as against

French and poststructuralist readings, which Nehamas touches on more or less in passing and from which he in fact dissociates himself (viii). In some aspects, his reading is closer to Foucault's.

The landscape has changed drastically since the mid-1980s, however, partly as the result of the general impact of deconstruction and poststructuralism, affecting, in addition to the field of literary criticism and theory, institutionalized philosophy as well. One can easily name dozens of books and collections and even more articles and essays on Nietzsche often in conjunction with Derrida and deconstruction and, more recently, Heidegger. I list many of these works in the bibliography and shall refer to some of them later in this study.

The emerging interest in Heidegger on the Anglo-American scene has been part of the same post-deconstructive developments, coupled with more recent writing on Heidegger in France, including by Derrida.

One cannot quite say the same about the studies and commentaries on Bataille, which, while expanding, remain relatively contained, although the translations of Bataille's own works have grown virtually exponentially during the last few years as well. One can in fact suggest that, in the landscape of the 1980s and early 1990s, in many ways more politically and ideologically oriented—and specifically, Foucauldian and Marxist—the gradient of deconstructive interests, again specifically in Derrida's own work, shifted more toward Heidegger, as opposed to the more Nietzschean, Freudian, and general economic themes of earlier deconstruction. This shift also affects some of the more recent books on Nietzsche. I have commented extensively on these developments and many related works on Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida in *Reconfigurations* and shall engage some of them as the present study proceeds.

30. The French landscape at issue must include, in addition to Sartre and Lévi-Strauss, who is Derrida's most explicit reference, the inescapable figure of Bataille, particularly given Bataille's proximity to Nietzsche. One can specifically mention Sartre's attack on Bataille, which Derrida refers to in the sequence of footnotes in "From Restricted to General Economy" (*Writing and Difference*, 336–37 nn. 28, 30, 31, 34). How much of the "entirety" of the French landscape Derrida's references cover remains an interesting question, including in relation to Lacan, Althusser, Deleuze, and emerging feminist theories in France. Derrida's essay was originally delivered against the background of the American political landscape in that remarkable year 1968—a turning point in France and in the United States, as well as elsewhere, in Czechoslovakia, for example. It is an epic, though also tragic, landscape.

31. In terms of the history of reading Hegel and "reading us" reading Hegel, Kojève's reading of Hegel has played a major role in joining the question of Hegel—"Who, him, Hegel?"—and the question of man—"Who, we?"—but



Hegel may well have been the first to pose this question—"reading us" and reading himself, or writing—inscribing—us and himself into his text.

32. This issue is of considerable significance in the context of Derrida's and de Man's readings of and exchanges on Rousseau, which became an important feature of the landscape under discussion.

33. As earlier, "presence" serves here as a general rubric around which the metaphysics of presence, which may, however, also take the form of the metaphysics of difference or becoming.

34. These propositions and the economy of presence in Heidegger in general would need to be further nuanced, specifically via Derrida's analysis of Heidegger in "*Ousia and Grammē*" (in *Margins*) and related elaborations in Derrida's more recent work on Heidegger. The present point could be maintained under all conditions, however.

35. Barbara Harlow's translation, modified here, is strained and renders, inexplicably, Derrida's "phallogocentrisme" as phallogocentrism. The French reads: "La 'femme'—le mot fait époque—ne croit pas davantage à l'envers franc de la castration, à l'anti-castration. Elle est trop rusée pour cela et elle sait—d'elle, de son opération du moins, nous, mais qui, nous?, devrions l'apprendre—qu'un tel renversement lui ôterait toute possibilité de simulacre, reviendrait en vérité au même et l'installerait plus sûrement que jamais dans la vieille machine, dans le phallogocentrisme assisté de son compère, image inversée des pupilles, élève chahuteur c'est-à-dire disciple discipliné du maître" (60).

36. In *Glas*, Derrida offers further elaborations along these lines, in relation to the question of woman, the question of repression, and the question of dialectic and Hegel (181–91).

37. Derrida is also using, or rather playing upon the term 'epoch' in the Husserlian sense of reduction or curtailment—"abbreviation"—of difference in general, here certainly encompassing sexual difference and gender difference.

38. In Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*.

39. Derrida continues to pursue these themes throughout his writing, most specifically in his essays on Joyce; and most recently in *Donner le temps*; *Given Time*, where he explores both the myth of Ulysses and the myth of Icarus in the context, implied here as well, of circulation, economy, and related problematics.

40. The formulations just cited indicate Derrida's significance for French feminist theory, specifically in the works of Cixous, Irigaray, and Kofman. These themes reemerge later in "Choreographies," *Diacritics* 12 (1982), where both Levinas and Heidegger are mentioned, and in Derrida's essay on Heidegger "*Geschlecht*: différence sexuelle, différence ontologique," in *Psyché*; "*Geschlecht*: Sexual difference, ontological difference," and as I have indicated, they are important throughout Derrida's writing, particularly after *Spurs*.

41. See Derrida's analysis in *Limited Inc.*

42. Here one should perhaps particularly mention Irigaray's *Amante marine; Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*, although Nietzsche is a continuous reference point in Cixous, and Kofman's work has been a powerful presence on the modern scene of Nietzsche studies.

43. Here one might point to other references, specifically Blake, Goya's and de Sade's contemporary and one of Bataille's major interests. Blake's art is, of course, complementary by definition. One might even say that the interplay of both forms of writing in Blake, poetry and engraving, as both are engraved, is more heterogeneously interactive—and interactively heterogeneous, or complementary in the present sense—than it is dialectical or unified, whatever Blake's own claims or desires may have been in this respect. Blake's work thereby also complementarizes spatiotemporal perceptual and conceptual processes. Another inviting reference, sharing common sources with Bataille in Goya and Blake and in proximity to Bataille's surrealist connections, would be Max Ernst's collages and collage novels. The latter, as in Blake, may again be seen as offering a complementary, rather than a dialectical, form. In addition, Ernst's pictorial configurations, while easily traced to surrealism, display "quantum mechanical," complementary properties and they may have been influenced, as was surrealism, by contemporary science.

Of course, one must be careful not to overstate the case for such connections or possible influences; undoubtedly, many other genealogies are involved, such as Picasso's and Braque's collages, or Nietzsche and Freud, or Hegel, or, interactively, various mythological sources, as is also the case in Bataille, in whom all these genealogies can be traced.

44. See the analysis by Eleanor A. Sayre in her "Introduction to the Prints and Drawings Series" in *Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment*.

45. The French reads as follows: "Je m'excuse d'ajouter ici que cette définition de l'être et de l'excès ne peut philosophiquement se fonder, en ce que l'excès excède le fondement: l'excès est cela même par quoi l'être est d'abord, avant toutes choses, hors de toutes limites. L'être sans doute se trouve aussi dans des limites: ces limites nous permettent de parler (je parle aussi, mais en parlant je n'oublie pas que la parole, non seulement m'échappera, mais qu'elle m'échappe). Ces phrases méthodiquement rangées sont possibles (elles le sont dans une large mesure, puisque l'excès est l'exception, c'est le merveilleux, le miracle . . . ; et l'excès désigne l'attrait—l'attrait sinon l'horreur de tout ce qui est *plus que ce qui est*) mais leur impossibilité est d'abord donnée; si bien que jamais je ne suis lié; jamais je ne m'asservis, mais je réserve ma souveraineté, que seule ma mort, qui prouvera l'impossibilité où j'étais de me limiter à l'être sans excès, sépare de moi."

46. By a reverse traffic, as it were, this passage may be a hidden reference in Derrida's discussion of "Heidegger's hand," writing and technology in "La main

de Heidegger (*Geschlecht II*), *Psyché*; “*Geschlecht II: Heidegger’s Hand*” (in *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida*). The final sentence of Blanchot’s *L’Arrêt de Mort* (*The Death Sentence*), published in 1948—“And what is more, let him [who reads these pages] try to imagine the hand that is writing them: if he saw it, then perhaps reading would become a serious task for him”—may actually be another major reference for both Bataille and Derrida, who considered Blanchot’s text extensively in “Living on: Border Lines” and “The Law of Genre.”

47. ‘Reste’ is of course a key grapheme in Derrida, particularly in the economy of ‘iterability’, which implies an irreducible—an always already lost—‘remainder’ [reste] in any representation and ensures the possibility of a different iteration of any sign, and thus irreducibility of *writing* in Derrida’s sense. See “Signature Event Context” (in *Margins*) and *Limited Inc.*

48. For an interesting *reading*, in a deManian or post-deManian sense and style, of Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Van Gogh, and the metaphor or catachresis of the sun, see Andrzej Warminski’s *Readings in Interpretation*, xxxv–xxxli. The reading offered there is interestingly textualized and intertextualized in the deconstructive landscape, if perhaps repressing or at least suspending the unconscious dimensions of and in Nietzsche’s text, in fact, here reading Nietzsche against Sarah Kofman’s reading in *Nietzsche et la scène philosophique*, along the lines of the unconscious. It may be true that Kofman’s reading does not sufficiently problematize the unconscious, either, both in relation to Nietzsche and in general. Can there be the Dionysian, or the Apollinian, can there be “the birth of tragedy” in Nietzsche without the unconscious? Or, perhaps a better question, can there be the unconscious, in Nietzsche or in general, without the Dionysian?

49. See Warminski’s analysis just referred to.

50. The statement occurs in Atheneus, *Deipnosophistai* 8.39.347e.

## Chapter 4. Mediation, History, and Self-Consciousness

1. I shall capitalize Hegelian terms or signifiers—such as “History” and “Consciousness”—when they signify Hegel’s ultimate signified concepts, always defined as such at the level of *Geist*, and are given a unique significance by Hegel.

2. Identifying *Geist* with the collective human history has been a relatively prominent (mis)reading or (mis)correction of Hegel, for example, in Marx or Kojève; the resulting economies, however, are usually as problematic as Hegel’s, if not more so. As the sentence just cited, Hegel’s elaboration in this *long* paragraph—offering a compressed, *short*, version of the whole of history—and his many other elaborations suggest, the economy of this relation in Hegel is extraordinarily complex and, in my assessment, it does not lend itself to such an identification.

An earlier statement in “Reason” gives us a further sense of the never-diminishing complexity of this economy in Hegel: “It is thus that *consciousness*, positioned between universal Spirit and its individuality or sense-consciousness, has for the middle term the system of structured shapes assumed by consciousness as a self-systematizing whole of the life of Spirit—the system we are considering here, and which has its objective existence as world-history [So hat das *Bewußtsein*, zwischen dem allgemeinen Geiste und seiner Einzelheit oder dem sinnlichen Bewußtsein, zur Mitte das System der Gestaltungen des Bewußtseins, als ein zum Ganzen sich ordnendes Leben des Geistes,—das System, das hier betrachtet wird und welches als Weltgeschichte sein gegenständliches Dasein hat]” (*Phenomenology*, 178; *Werke* 3:225; translation modified).

3. I refer mainly to *Being and Time*, which may be seen as the final attempt of that type, trying to recomprehend rigorously but classically, among other things, Hegelian temporality and historicity. A rigorous recomprehension cannot be achieved classically, however—that is, by means of a restricted economy.

4. Certainly the history of the terms “spirit” and—as and *as not*—*Geist* that immediately surrounds Hegel’s writing, must be considered. Hegel’s text has both a powerful short-term and a powerful long-term historical memory, coupled, of course, with an equal power of forgetting. The history of the term and concept of spirit is the history of philosophy as ontotheology and the metaphysics of presence, within which the history of the term ‘spirit’ has played a crucial role. One must also mention more historically immediate sources of Hegel’s idea of *Geist* in Descartes, or Fichte and Schelling, particularly in relation to the absolute, or in the French Enlightenment, in, among others, Rousseau, Montesquieu, and Condorcet.

5. In this sense, the unequivocal *insistence* even on “reading” as a term, let alone any specific form of reading, becomes problematic. This problem does emerge in de Man and in some deManian and post-deManian criticism, such as Warminski’s *Readings in Interpretation*, as well as, although differently, in Derrida’s more recent works, in particular on de Man’s texts.

6. I refer here to the title phrase of Derrida’s essay closing *Margins of Philosophy* and discussing what may be seen as a general economy of these denominations.

7. Certainly, deconstructive readings make claims concerning Hegel’s claims, even though, and because, they expose the degree to which such claims are problematized by the movements of Hegel’s text. Such claims are made in Derrida’s readings, which explore the difference or *différance* between interpretations rather than choosing one interpretation or another. Nor can one explain or explain away claims upon Hegel’s claims and ideologies as “ideologizing misreading,” as de Man, *to an extent*, suggests in his later texts, although many of de Man’s warnings are justified and must be closely adhered to. Ideology then must

in turn be considered, whether it functions in mis-readings of Hegel or otherwise. One must follow, as rigorously as possible, the levels at which these claims are made and understand their boundaries and limits, at times using classical, at times critical or deconstructive strategies of reading. One must also differentiate the various claims and ideologies, however, such as aesthetic ideology in Kant and Schiller, or Hegel, which de Man considers.

Deconstruction, it is worth noting, at its best, has always paid a great deal more attention—and indeed respect—than many classical interpretations to the complexities and nuances of Hegel's and other major texts. The point must seem obvious by now; and it has been often, and often very directly made by most major practitioners of deconstruction, from the earliest texts on, although it has not been, and still is not always, heeded. Gasché's book makes this point well in relation to Derrida. His remarks on Husserl are particularly pertinent (*The Tain of the Mirror*, 246), but their import would apply equally to Hegel or Heidegger, as Derrida's work on all these authors testifies.

8. At one point, the latter was Hegel's subtitle. The *history* of the book, as is well known, is intractably complex and hardly Hegelian. It is governed by irreducible general economic effects, complementarities, and double binds, which allow, for example, the possibility of reading it as an uneasy fusion of two books under these two titles. See Otto Pöggeler's well-known account in *Hegels Idee Einer Phänomenologie des Geistes*; and "Die Komposition der Phänomenologie des Geistes" (in *Hegel-Studien*, vol. 3, *Beiträge zur Deutung der Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 27–74); as well as other essays in this issue, specifically by Hans Friedrich Fulda. On the title, in addition to Pöggeler's *Hegels Idee* (339–85) see Friedhelm Nicolin, "Zum Titelproblem der Phänomenologie des Geistes," *Hegel-Studien* 4 (1967):114–23. Heidegger's *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* offers an extensive discussion of the complexities involved in the question of composition and the place of the book (1–28). See also Fulda's *Das Problem einer Einleitung in Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik*. On the question of *reading* the indeterminacies in the *Phenomenology* by, and via, Heidegger, see Warminski's discussion in *Readings in Interpretation*, 112–15.

The historical dimensions of Hegel's work on the *Phenomenology* are of considerable interest and importance as well, particularly its well-known *debts* to Adam Smith and the question of political economy, on the one hand, and on the other, its relations to the French Revolution and subsequent and related events, specifically the Battle of Jena. The *Phenomenology* may, in a way, be seen as a great index, or a mark or graph in Derrida's sense of writing, of the conjunction of political economy and the French Revolution—an issue naturally of great significance to the history of Marxist readings of Hegel. These forces affect the determination and indeterminacies of, to borrow Hyppolite's title, "the genesis and structure of the *Phenomenology*." An extensive and well-documented historical

account of the role of Adam Smith and the notion of economy in Hegel and the *Phenomenology* is offered by Laurence Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics, and the Politics of Spirit, 1770–1807*.

9. For Kojève, history is a central determination of the book (150–65). For Hyppolite's discussion, see the chapter "History and Phenomenology" in *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. I am not suggesting that their reading of Hegelian historicity in the *Phenomenology*, quite different to begin with, cannot be criticized. There are several displacements that can be seen as problematic, and I shall comment on some of them later. Conversely, while I do want to stress the profound sense of Hegelian historicity in their reading, I am not suggesting that other commentators have missed this point; on the contrary, most major commentators, while debating the character, determination, and models of history in the book—or of the book itself—would make this point to one degree or another. Certainly, it is crucial for most Marxist Hegelians, or Hegelian Marxists, such as Georg Lukács and Herbert Marcuse, particularly in Marcuse's *Hegels Ontologie und die Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit; Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of History* (1932).

10. The concluding elaborations of the *Philosophy of Right* are highly indicative of this economy as well. Michael Allen Gillespie, in his *Hegel, Heidegger, and the Ground of History*, is correct in drawing attention to this joint interrelatedness of and difference between the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of History*, and in seeking the grounding of this relation in a broader configuration of the Hegelian system, which he centers (85–115) in the first *Logic*, the work that is unquestionably crucial to these issues and to everything in Hegel. I have considerable problems with the analysis itself, which, in my view, in spite of pointing out useful historical connections, severely diminishes the richness of Hegel's concepts and elaborations. It is interesting that Gillespie, in his discussion of the *Phenomenology*, pays no attention to Heidegger's analysis of the book, which, whatever its shortcomings, is exemplary in exploring and exposing the immense rigor of Hegel's analysis. More generally, in spite of its title, the book does not really offer a mutual engagement of Hegelian and Heideggerian thinking on history, or a critical analysis of the ground of history—in either thinking or in general, and certainly not of the question of ground itself. The analysis as a whole remains fully within classical and indeed pre-Heideggerian limits.

11. On the latter issue, see Stephen W. Melville's discussion in *Philosophy Beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism*.

12. Beyond Robert Pippin's *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*, one can cite, as examples of such "nonmetaphysical" readings, Dieter Henrich's numerous works or Theunissen's *Sein und Schein: Die kritische Funktion der Hegelschen Logic* along more classical philosophical lines, and several other studies, including a number cited by Pippin in this context (*Hegel's*

*Idealism*, 262, n. 10); William Desmond's works; or various attempts on the more literary critical side; or deconstructive and postdeconstructive readings, exploring the more general economic strata of Hegel's texts, such as by de Man, or in Gasché's *The Tain of the Mirror* and Warminski's *Readings in Interpretation*. Following Derrida, Gasché, however, mainly argues, correctly, for the metaphysical appurtenance of Hegel's text. Gasché offers an extensive and well-argued discussion of the question of reflexivity in this context.

13. On the question of *reading*, specifically in relation to Heidegger's reading of Hegel, see again Gasché's and Warminski's texts cited earlier.

14. It is not my intention to offer here an assessment of Pippin's *interpretation* of Hegel; it appears to me superior to previous attempts along these lines on the Anglo-American scene—such as Charles Taylor's *Hegel*, perhaps the best known, Robert Solomon's *In the Spirit of Hegel*, H. S. Harris's works—a scene that is well surveyed by Pippin, along with much classical German scholarship and some French studies. I do not comment on these works further here and do not engage them because virtually without exception they bypass the questions at issue in the present study, which pursues different trajectories of relationships between Hegel and modern intellectual history. I do find the “repression” of history in Pippin's book, in the broader sense of history and repression at issue in the present study, representative and symptomatic.

15. The issue is important in a variety of contexts, specifically in relation to the stratifications of closure as discussed earlier. Gasché's analysis of reflexivity in Hegel and elsewhere, in *The Tain of the Mirror*, reflects both the possibility and the necessity of differentiating among various aspects of consciousness and knowledge, as well as the limitations of the book. His analysis, as indicated, does not engage the problematics of consciousness and self-consciousness, or, perhaps more crucially, the unconscious; these omissions further delimit its scope, again by design, within the philosophical register. But by the same token, they also suggest the complexities and nuances that need to be accentuated within this demarcation—the philosophical *différance* of reflection. Gasché's analysis is effective in presenting the history of the philosophy of reflection and the philosophical critique, or its self-critique, of reflexivity, from its pre-Hegelian developments to Hegel's speculative philosophy as a critique of the preceding modes of philosophical reflection to the modern commentaries on and critique of Hegel to Husserl, Heidegger, and Derrida.

16. It is worth recalling Plato's passage in *Parmenides* (133 de), in which Parmenides inserts the question of master and slave into the analysis of the relation to the transcendental. This passage was undoubtedly well known to Hegel and could have been one of his sources and contexts here and elsewhere in the *Phenomenology*. *Parmenides* is invoked at the end of the Preface (*Phenomenology*, 44; *Werke* 3:66).

17. I do not intend to oversimplify any of these cases, for in all of them one deals with complex proximities and distances, or transgressions and reinstatements, whether in relation to Hegel or to the metaphysics of presence in general. In Bakhtin's case, it is worth noting, much as yet may be gained from an exploration of the relationships between Bakhtin's dialogical text and Hegel's dialectical text, which relationships are more firmly established in the case of Marxism or Levinas, or several other economies of "otherness" that may be mentioned here—such as in Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, Lacan, or Derrida. It must, however, be done without suspending or reducing the richness and rigorous specificity of either, as Bakhtin himself sometimes does in relation to Hegel, who, admittedly, is not Bakhtin's direct subject.

This exploration would, I think, provide an important perspective on the relationships between Bakhtin and the poststructuralist landscape, and specifically Derrida and deconstruction, that has been a topic of a rather intense debate. Michael Holquist's many works on and around Bakhtin, beginning with his book on Dostoyevsky, *Dostoyevsky and the Novel*, and most recently *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World*, may be credited most for relating Bakhtin's work to poststructuralist problematics and texts—for making him a figure of the poststructuralist landscape. But, as the present study suggests, this landscape and its figures, Bakhtin included, are also a landscape and figures in the shadow of Hegel.

18. See, for example, remarks in the later "An Outline of Psycho-Analysis" (*The Standard Edition*, 23, 159).

19. Cited in Stanley L. Jaki, Introduction, Kant's *Universal Natural History and Theory of Heaven*, 9. See also Heidegger's important discussion in *What is a Thing?* (77–80), or again Derrida's comments in *The Post Card* (267).

20. These remarks are not meant to suggest, quite the contrary, that one should not either pursue new readings of Hegel opened by new theories or fields, such as deconstruction, or conversely use Hegel in order to challenge them. At issue is the rigor of a given reading or theory and the claims produced by them. If, for example, one wants to argue, as Gillian Rose does, that "the Hegelian critique of positing would offer the most serious challenge to Derrida's *différance* as production" (*Dialectic of Nihilism*, 138), one would need to offer a much more careful and rigorous understanding of Derrida's concepts and his relationships to Hegel than Rose offers. Rose's treatment is, unfortunately, unacceptable in either respect—at best a misunderstanding; and the same may be said about the book's treatment of and commentaries upon other counter-Hegelian figures, in particular Nietzsche and Deleuze, or the structuralist and poststructuralist landscape as a whole, and in truth of Hegel as well.

In closing his "Beyond Deconstruction?" David Wood refers to Rose's book as an attempt to take "Hegel's solution more seriously" as a potential response to Derrida's challenge to philosophy as the metaphysics of presence. The book,



however, is hardly a good, if acceptable at all, choice either as a reading of Hegel or as a challenge to Derrida. One cannot object to Wood's more general contention that a different Hegel may emerge in the wake of and potentially as a challenge to Derrida, whose contribution is highly praised by Wood in general, although he appears to oversimplify somewhat Derrida on Hegel.

Wood is correct in suggesting, in accord with the present analysis, that there may be "another Hegel, for whom difference and differentiation have a significance not exhausted by their reconciliation in the Absolute" and that "it would seem . . . that it is Derrida to whom one would first turn for assistance in drawing out that other Hegel" (185). It is, once again, the question of the difference between different *economies* of difference, as Derrida profoundly understood in his reading of Hegel.

21. It may be that the first section, "Sense-Certainty," and Hegel's dialectic of sense-certainty in general are of particular significance, as a number of authors maintain. In a way, beginning with its opening, the text of Derrida's *Glas*, obliquely but decisively, inscribes the text of Hegel on sense-certainty throughout. Hyppolite's *Logique et existence* would be a major direct example. See, also, Warminski's comments in his discussion of "Sense-Certainty" in *Readings in Interpretation* (163–64), citing Hyppolite and Pierre-Jean Labarrière's *Structure et mouvement dialectique dans la Phénoménologie de l'esprit de Hegel*. Labarrière correctly stresses the role of consciousness in the determination of the economy of *Geist* in Hegel.

Heidegger's analysis of "Sense-Certainty" and of "Consciousness" in general in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* is exemplary in grasping the significance of this part of the book, particularly with respect to the relationships between the unmediated and the mediated in Hegel. Warminski's study, strangely enough, given its subject, never refers to this analysis.

These relationships are equally crucial for Heidegger's own economy, on which I shall comment later in this study in the context of the question of temporality. Much of the analysis in *Being and Time* and in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* would be pertinent here, particularly the analysis of the phenomenology of "assertion [Aussage]" and *aletheia* in the latter study (205–24).

22. One may again call to mind "Who Thinks Abstractly?" (in *Hegel: Texts and Commentary*).

23. Insofar as it relates to human consciousness of *Geist*, this "forgetting" is similar, but not identical, to what Heidegger sees as the forgetting and concealment of Being [Sein], since the question of Being is related to mediation, historicity, and becoming. A fundamental relation thus emerges between *meditation* and *mediation*, most crucially the mediation between the human and particularly philosophical existence—being-becoming—and the highest form of Being-Becoming, such as Hegelian *Geist*, Heideggerian *Sein*, or in Heidegger's later

works, a relation to a still higher “command [Geheiss]” that the thinker [Denker] or the poet [Dichter] must hear.

24. See also the general discussion (sections 92–95). In the *Phenomenology*, see in particular the opening of the first chapter, “Consciousness,” although both the Preface and the final chapter, “Absolute Knowledge,” replay these propositions throughout. The first *Logic* is, of course, equally crucial here, as it specifically relates the whole question of being and becoming to the question of the mathematical continuum and “the infinitesimal magnitudes” of differential calculus (“Being,” “Remark 4: Incomprehensibility of the Beginning,” *Hegel’s Science of Logic*, 104). The latter must be exceeded, however, in the Hegelian infinitude that cannot be contained within mathematical infinity, specifically as defined by differential calculus in “Quantity” and “Quantum” (187–313). The latter analysis is crucial to Hegel’s whole argument in the first *Logic*, and implicitly these considerations are engaged throughout the *Phenomenology* or, of course, the *Encyclopedia*. Lyotard interestingly connects Hegel’s analysis of *Resultat* [the result] as becoming in the first chapter of the first *Logic* to both Parmenides and Gorgias’s “neither Being nor Not-Being” in Gorgias’s *On Not-Being* (*The Differend*, 15). Plato’s analysis in *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus* is of course equally relevant here.

25. This structure is repeated in the first *Logic* and the *Encyclopedia* as well, in part, necessarily, since, as we have seen, Hegel also inscribes the history of knowledge, culminating in absolute and infinite knowledge; and one must keep in mind throughout the complexity and specificity of both these determinations in Hegel.

26. The latter has been the subject of much discussion in deconstruction after Derrida’s “Outwork” [Hors Livre] in *Dissemination*. In truth, however, it has been endlessly discussed ever since Hegel, beginning in fact with Hegel himself—in the opening of the Preface against which Derrida plays in “Outwork.” Hypolite must be specifically mentioned, both in relation to Hegel and as the major background of Derrida’s “Outwork.” The Preface actually exceeds the *Phenomenology*, looking into the future of *Geist* and Hegel’s own work. That excess in fact follows from and in fact enables Derrida’s analysis and play in “Outwork.” One could certainly consider the question of the continuum and self-reflection in relation to the structure of the *Phenomenology* as a book or in relation to what follows in Hegel, in its Heraclitean flow, its lines, its circles and its spirals, or its fractals. These structural configurations, however, are never quite linear or dialectical, although they do not entirely lack linearity and dialectic, either.

27. Hegel’s usage of an embryo as a comparison—“though the embryo is indeed *in itself* a human being, it is not so *for itself*”—is of much interest in a variety of contexts, from contemporary history and perhaps Hegel’s own biography up to quite recent, even current, theoretical and political discussions. It can be considered in relation to the discussion of the family in the *Phenomenology* and elsewhere, specifically in the *Philosophy of Right*; or in relation to Hegel’s discus-

sion of organic nature throughout his text; or in relation to the very structure of the *Phenomenology* as a book, or the philosophical enterprise and the system of knowledge in general. The latter type of analysis leads Derrida to *dissemination* that “figures that which *cannot be* the father’s [la dissémination figure ce qui *ne revient pas* au père]”—neither in Hegel’s sense nor in Freud’s sense nor in Lacan’s sense. “Neither in germination nor in castration [ni dans la germination ni dans la castration]” (*Positions*, 86; *Positions*, 120)—neither in the text of philosophy nor outside this text, by simultaneously disturbing the philosophical comfort of the often assumed and always desired separation of this outside and this inside. This separation is finally impossible, “either in germination or in castration.” This different “metaphorical model”—*dissemination-différance*—this *writing* is also a different model of *insemination* as *textual production*.

Interestingly, the preceding example in Hegel’s passage is “all *animals*” and zoology. One may thus detect a classical metaphysical chain inscribed, perhaps imperceptibly, by Hegel. This chain proceeds from the animal to the embryo to the human being—for *itself* [*für sich*—and then, following the order of the *Phenomenology*, from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness to Reason—“cultivated Reason, which has *made* itself into what it is *in itself*”—to *Geist* and then to Absolute Knowledge. The parts of Hegel’s system—and text—reflect the whole in the manner of Althusser’s metaphoric causality or, again, fractals.

Undermining this Hegelian, but not only Hegelian, definition of the human would not lead to a simple resolution of the question of the embryo as a human being in relation to the question of man and the question of woman, whether as a political or a theoretical issue. It would imply, however, that the issues cannot be resolved by way of consciousness and self-consciousness. For we cannot accept Hegel’s resolution of the question of consciousness *as self-consciousness*. Even less can we accept that, for Hegel, defining, view of the human self-consciousness as the consciousness of the self-consciousness of *Geist*. The latter view actually defines much that lies beyond, if in the shadow of, Hegel. Hegelian *Geist* has an enormous potential for transforming itself, as a transcendental signified or signifier, or both at once, into “Matter,” “Capital,” “the Unconscious,” and many other names and concepts.

28. More generally, Hegel announces here and develops in the *Phenomenology* and subsequent works a critique of all preceding philosophical reflection, specifically in Kant, but also in Fichte and Schelling, by means of his speculative dialectical philosophy, demanded and demanding the totality of *Geist*—the True that is the Whole. I shall comment further on these issues in Chapter 6.

29. In general, this is a very important section of the book with additional remarks interpreting Hegel and Darwin, which I shall discuss in Chapter 7.

30. The title of the section itself is “On the old problem: ‘*What is German?*’”

31. Derrida’s analysis of this metaphor in “White Mythology” is well

known. His discussion of Descartes, via Foucault, in "Cogito and the History of Madness," in *Writing and Difference*, remains a useful supplementary, or ordinary, text:

32. See in particular his commentary on "Idealism" in the first *Logic* (*Hegel's Science of Logic*, 154–56). Hegel's powerful perceptions there confirm that "idealism" is a larger problem, such as that of metaphysical materialism, as just indicated. It is the problem of philosophy as *against* metaphysics, and specifically the metaphysics of presence—perhaps posed as such already by Hegel, and indeed, imperceptibly for him, more radically than he himself would want to, and closer to Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida.

33. See Gasché's analysis in *The Tain of the Mirror* (13–78).

34. On this point of the infinity of Absolute Knowledge and its process or economy in general, Heidegger's discussion in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* is particularly penetrating and important, as it supplements his discussion of the relationships between the immediate and mediated in Hegel. Locally, under the condition of the continuum, this is in fact the same economy.

35. Phenomenology will be operative, at certain stages, as part of *Geist's* process of self-knowledge, where it would be different from what Hegel calls Science [Wissenschaft] in the *Phenomenology* (*Phenomenology*, 491; *Werke* 3:589), which may be and often has been understood as a reference to *Logic* (21–22; *Werke* 3:39). I would see it as a more encompassing form of philosophical cognition, incorporating but surpassing—a kind of *Aufhebung* of—logic. The conclusion of the first *Logic* suggests the former view, the conclusion of the *Encyclopedia* the latter, the *Phenomenology*, as I shall suggest presently, makes the case more radically undecidable.

36. Here again Hegel's elaborations in both *Logics* are crucial, particularly in the opening of the first chapter "Being" of the first *Logic*, where he discusses Heraclitus and Parmenides.

In Heidegger's *meditation on mediation*, an analogous but not quite identical economy must be at work when "Nothing, conceived as the pure 'Other' than what-is," is pronounced "the veil of Being" in the postscript to "What is Metaphysics?": "In Being all that comes to pass in what-is is perfected from everlasting" (*Existence and Being*, 360). This economy is not identical to Hegel's, since "Nothingness" itself is refigured; and Heidegger reappropriates Hegelian propositions in the first and the second *Logic* to the question of Being in Heidegger's sense. The procedure is analogous to Hegel in postulating, to use Heidegger's own terms, a control of historical and interpretive transformations in order for them—that is, those that are proper, authentic, to history and interpretation—not to be lost in the haphazardous and meaningless flux, or, an alternative that for Heidegger is the same thing, in the uncontrolled, haphazard accumulation of meaning.

37. See particularly Book III, ll. 80–344, where the subject is, incidentally, sacrifice, thus making it a possible context of the economy of sacrifice in the end of the *Phenomenology*. Like Hegel, Milton is the great thinker of consciousness and self-consciousness, in contrast, it may be noted, to Shakespeare, who already understood, to use Nietzsche's phrase, "the grand economy" of life—the general, and above all unconscious, economy.

38. Arthur Danto in his *Analytical Philosophy of History* (1964), republished as *Narration and Knowledge* (1985) offers the following assessment: "Discussing the meaning of history as a whole, [Hegel] supposed it to be this: the progressive coming to self-consciousness of the Absolute. Each thing that happened in History was significant, only in relation to this story, or insignificant, but Hegel never asked what was the significance of the Absolute's final self-awareness. Or, if he had, he would doubtless have moved to a quite different sense of 'significant' than that applied to the ordinary events of history" (*Narration and Knowledge*, 14).

The first part of this proposition is "doubtless" correct. The second, however, is very much in doubt, above all because Hegel not only asked, but also answered this question, or, at the very least, his life's work is an attempt precisely to answer this question. The "significance" at issue is the possibility of the *meaning* of history, and, and as, the history of meaning, and finally, the possibility—the utopia—of perfect history, conditioned by the absolute self-consciousness of *Geist*. As we have seen, the ordinary events of history can have meaning or significance only in relation to this self-awareness. "A different sense of 'significant'" would demand a suspension of *Geist* altogether. Would that prospect not be what Danto in fact suggests? Danto does not say so, nor does it seem to follow from the context or from Danto's analysis as a whole. While suspending this relation of its overt idealist form, Danto's own "analytic philosophy of history" is in truth very much short of Hegel.

In his more recent commentaries on art, for example, in "The Death of Art" and *The State of the Art*, Danto appeals to such Hegelian or Hegelianist themes as the death of art and the end of history. In the later case, in particular, Danto does not seem to engage a sustained rigorous exploration of concepts such as consciousness, self-consciousness, history, and their interactions, either in terms of reading Hegel or in terms of critically questioning or theoretically developing them. These concepts often appear to be used uncritically as accepted or given; they are not put to thematic or historical scrutiny and their metaphysical appurtenance in Hegel or elsewhere is not questioned. This is one of the reasons why Danto's own analysis remains metaphysically grounded throughout. While Danto acknowledges the complexity of Hegelian ideas and the impossibility of putting them "in a nutshell" (*The State of the Art*, 215), he at times appears to slide into rather crude, popularizing (mis)conceptions of Hegel's vision, for example, of the end of history ("The Death of Art," 33), which are hardly cogent or useful. The

questions of art and the death of art in Hegel would require a separate analysis, which cannot be undertaken here. I shall be able to comment on them only in a very limited fashion in this study.

39. I refer here to the structure of Absolute Knowledge and its approximations. This structure need not mean, of course, that forgetting plays no role in Hegel's analysis of memory, let alone in the production of Hegel's own text, which, as any text, forgets, and must forget, just as much as it remembers, perhaps more than it remembers. But, then, the power of Hegel and Hegel's text to remember is remarkable, even, as de Man points out, "his ability to remember that one should never forget to forget" ("Hypogram and Inscription: Michael Riffaterre's Poetics of Reading," *The Resistance to Theory*, 42). These, as shall be seen in the next chapter, are persistent themes in de Man's writing and they have persistent connections to Hegel, both in de Man's writings on Hegel himself and in his other writing, as well as in several deManian or post-deManian approaches to Hegel and Hegelian problematics, or to de Man himself.

40. Although himself a principal influence along with Freud and a significant contributor to this history, Jung, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, designates as his major precursors first Hegel, then Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

41. "Mehrdeutigkeit" may even be read as literally as the "more-meaningness," both in the sense of the fullness of the meaning and plurality and controlled ambiguity of meaning.

42. See Derrida's comments opposing the Nietzschean affirmative economy to the Rousseauistic nostalgic economy in "Structure, Sign, and Play" (*Writing and Difference*, 292–93). This relation is never simply oppositional, but is rather complementary—a *différance* (293)—and must be conceived general economically.

43. Alan Bass's rendering of "elle ne jouit pas" as "it does not pleasurably consume" is precise; but it does suspend the sexual connotations of the passage and, thus, the potential implications for the economy of the feminine, as developed, for example, in Irigaray and Cixous, and for the reinscription of the economy of pleasure there.

44. Of course, "the end of history" in Hegel entails a variety of interpretations, particularly given that the moment or the process of transition to Absolute Knowledge or analogous configurations in later works imply a qualitative transformation of the "historical" process. The situation, however, is further complicated by the fact that this transition is also an *Aufhebung*, specifically in relation to science [Wissenschaft], on which I shall further comment later. As he often does, here, too, Hegel creates a kind of paradigmatic machine, generating various utopian economies of history and of interpretations of his text itself.

Kojève's long "Note to the Second Edition" (Kojève, 159–62), added in 1959, interestingly reflects this situation. Kojève originally reads the end of history in

Hegel as “the end of man,” which is, of course, in turn a paradigm, determined by a definition of man, by the question “Who are we?” particularly in relation to philosophical man (158–59). Kojève, however, modifies his reading using, curiously, American, Russian, and finally, in 1959, Japanese “civilization,” to illustrate his point. As to the “civilizations” themselves, his observations are more or less discountable. What is interesting about his comments is how they reflect, as I think they do, Hegel’s own geographical discussions, particularly in the *Philosophy of History*.

Hegel’s view on these matters, which can be traced throughout his works, including the *Phenomenology*, hardly relates to Absolute Knowledge, which suggests that Kojève’s reading of it—either as the end of man, or even the end of history—and other readings of that type may be less “Hegelian” than they may appear. Sometimes, in the context of Hegel or in general, the end of history may refer to a transformation from a given mode of history, such as Hegel’s, or a Hegelian, Marxist, or other idea of world history, to a different, as yet unexplored “historical” economy or an economy no longer historical insofar as it does not conform to any previous historical configuration. Current geopolitical events are sometimes seen in this way. Such views and positions are understandable and at times useful, but it is necessary to keep in mind, if not Hegel’s notion, his reasons for introducing *Aufhebung*. For, while new, even radically new, configurations, do emerge, the possibility that old configurations may reemerge must be kept in mind. One cannot ignore or repress either possibility—transformation and rein-statement.

45. See Heidegger’s commentary in *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit* (32–33).

46. See Hegel’s Remark 4, “Incomprehensibility of the Beginning,” in chapter 1 of book 1 of the first *Logic*. Whether in relation to Hegel’s ideas on history and philosophy or in relation to his own works, the question of beginning and transition has a long history in Hegel studies, whether along classical lines, such as in Hans-Georg Gadamer, in the general context of the question of transition in Hegel, *Hegel’s Dialectic* (54–74); in Dieter Henrich, *Hegel im Kontext* (73–94); or in Heidegger and, along deconstructive lines, in Derrida.

47. The economy of the “almost” is equally crucial in Derrida’s analysis of Rousseau in *Of Grammatology*, and in all Derridean economies themselves.

48. Hegel offers a similar analysis of “organic Nature” that “has no history” earlier in “Observing Reason” (*Phenomenology*, 178). As the analysis in “The Philosophy of Nature” in the *Encyclopedia* suggests most directly, given the view, in many ways well grounded, of Nature’s becoming as “free contingent happening,” at issue is also the question of the conditions of the possibility of natural law—the possibility of Newton. The question thus is: How is the structured science of Nature possible? The question is still very much with us. See Pippin’s remarks (*Hegel’s Idealism*, 170–71) in the context of Kant. Here again, Heideg-

ger, of whom Pippin is nearly dismissive, has much to offer, and precisely in the context of Kant, in his discussion of the relationships between the experimental and the mathematical aspects of physics in *What is a Thing?*

49. See Derrida's comment (*Dissemination*, 47) in the context of the economy of the preface-postface in Hegel, which reflects and further enhances the complexities at issue.

50. In this sense, the concluding chapter and even the concluding pages of the *Phenomenology* may be seen as fusing and compressing many of the possibilities at issue here.

51. The question does not appear to be posed quite in these terms in the Hegelian literature, although relevant considerations are found in many readings and discussions, including many of those cited in the present study, whether German, French, or Anglo-American and whether proceeding along more classically philosophical, deconstructive, or post-deconstructive, and poststructuralist lines of inquiry. I shall comment, briefly, on what transpires in this respect in some of the major encounters with the *Phenomenology* most relevant to the present study.

Kojève's lectures suggest the difference, even opposition, between science or philosophy, including Hegelian logic, and Absolute Knowledge in the chapter "Philosophy and Wisdom" (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 75–99), which opens by suggesting that the final chapter of the *Phenomenology* is no longer concerned with philosophy as philosophy. Insofar as this excess is seen as the excess of philosophy, but following the philosophical gradient, Kojève's view is congruent with the point suggested here, although it is complicated by the opening remarks in the "Summary of the First Six Chapters of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*" (31) and several related, but not fully developed, elaborations throughout the book. In general, Kojève's reading is quite different from most of the views of this study, in part by virtue of displacing Hegel toward the anthropological register and thus suspending another crucial Hegelian excess, the excess of *Geist*'s knowledge over all human forms of knowledge, individual or collective.

Perhaps influenced by Kojève in this respect, Bataille goes much further in claiming, problematically, that Hegel in the end of the *Phenomenology* sacrifices scientific consciousness and knowledge to the naivete of sacrifice. This claim is problematic because Hegelian excess suggests the economy whereby, if Science is sacrificed, it is to a form of knowledge that is, as it were, even more "scientific," and more historical, certainly more self-conscious, than science itself. In short, the *Aufhebung* is at issue, and thus the conservation and supersession, not the abandonment—sacrifice—of science. In a sense, and with equally decisive differences, Bataille's general economy is similarly more "scientific" than its classical, philosophical counterparts—restricted economies—which a general economy may also utilize in its practice. This parallel, in part, explains but, again, does not



justify Bataille's appeal to the *Aufhebung* at certain points, or conversely his projection of certain aspects of general economy back into Hegel. In the first place, the *Aufhebung* does not allow for, indeed forbids, the unconscious, theoretical losses, untheoretical excesses, and other nonscientific aspects of general economy; secondly, a general economic, for example, complementary, recomprehension need not imply a Hegelian organic unity within a newly emerged configuration. The economy of sacrifice, which emerges at the end of the *Phenomenology*, is crucial, however; for, as shall be seen in more detail later, this economy is Hegelian history (*Phenomenology*, 491–92). As both Kojève's and Bataille's encounters with Hegel suggest, the relationships between religion, or art, and philosophy in Hegel further complicate the process in the *Phenomenology* or *Encyclopedia*. Hegel's *Aufhebung* of the religious *Geist* by way of the philosophical *Geist* remains a decisive point, however, making, at a certain point of history, authentic knowledge and truth philosophical rather than theological.

While both Kojève and Bataille associate themselves with the Marxist tradition, in this respect both are quite different from, indeed, opposed to, Marx, who, in *The Philosophical and Economic Manuscripts of 1844* and elsewhere, more or less identifies Hegel's Absolute Knowledge or analogous economies in later works with philosophy. Most Marxist Hegelians in fact maintain this position.

Hypolite correctly points out the complexity of all determinations in the final chapter of the *Phenomenology* (*Genesis and Structure*, 573). Yet, interestingly, his discussion does not explore the possibilities of multiple determination or indeterminacies; and his identification of Absolute Knowledge with "speculative philosophy" (573) is not really argued, either in relation to this complexity or in general. Hypolite's main concern in his discussion of the *Phenomenology*'s final chapter is the relation between phenomenology and logic, and the *Phenomenology* and *Logic*, which is indeed a crucial point, but in this case it leads to a reductive reading of the chapter, which offers much more.

Heidegger in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (1931) appears to maintain a similar identification between Absolute Knowledge and Science, defined, however, as "genuine knowledge" (17). Heidegger's analysis, in general, is immensely rigorous and nuanced with respect to most relevant Hegelian determinations and the aspects of the configuration at issue. An intimation of a transformation of the economy of knowledge is detectable in the movement toward Absolute Knowledge. Connected by Heidegger to, among other things, the question of the completion of Western philosophy in Hegel, this transformation is perhaps correlative with, but, as Heidegger argues in this and other works, not identical to, the difference between metaphysical or ontic determination and the Heideggerian ontology of Being, which itself has a complex relation to all philosophy and to all prior conceptions of philosophy. To the extent that the term can apply, Heidegger's *interpretation* of the economy of Absolute Knowledge and its relation to

science and philosophy is still among the best, even though Hegel is displaced, specifically toward various Heideggerian economies.

Derrida's views on the issue in "The Pit and the Pyramid," *Dissemination*, again particularly in "Outwork" [Hors Livre] (47), and *Glas* are prudently undetermined, or undecidable; they seem, predictably, to argue for the undecidability of the relations at issue here.

52. One can specifically refer to *Antigone*, mentioned in the relevant context of "the *difference* between self-consciousness and essence" (*Phenomenology*, 261) and in another relevant context—"the ethical order," which is the problematics of the other and of "the *unity* of actuality and substance" (284). Hegel tells many stories about Time, the Notion, Science, or History, or about himself, disguised as stories about Time, the Notion, Science, or History. Dialectic has been supported by tragedy all along; and History may as well play its part according to the rules of tragedy.

53. The German of the elaborations just cited reads: "[Die andere Seite aber seines Werdens, die *Geschichte*, ist das *wissende*, sich *vermittelnde* Werden—der an die Zeit entäußerte Geist; aber diese Entäußerung ist ebenso die Entäußerung ihrer selbst; das Negative ist das Negative seiner selbst. Dies Werden stellt eine träge Bewegung und Aufeinanderfolge von Geistern dar, . . . Das Geisterreich, das auf diese Weise sich in dem Dasein gebildet, macht eine Aufeinanderfolge aus, worin einer den anderen ablöste und jeder das Reich der Welt von dem vorhergehenden übernahm. Ihr Ziel ist die Offenbarung der Tiefe, und diese ist *der absolute Begriff*" (*Werke* 3:590–91).

54. That is not to say, of course, that Hegel simply suspends the problem of finitude. Quite the contrary he thought, profoundly, on the problem of finitude in all of its aspects—conceptual, categorical, experiential, and real—and he rigorously considers it throughout his writing. In fact he can be seen as a great precursor of Heidegger—the great modern or pre-postmodern philosopher of finitude. Hegel's economy of *infinite* is not simply a suspension of finitude, but is, on the contrary, a response to the problem of finitude. Hegel's analysis of finitude in the first *Logic* may well be most significant conceptually, but the concluding elaborations of the *Phenomenology* may well be Hegel's greatest passages on both finitude and infinitude alike.

55. See in particular the section "Reference and Signs [*Verweisung und Zeichen*]" (*Being and Time* I. 3: 107–14), where the economy of signification governed by the relation to Being is very close to Hegelian semiology governed by the Notion.

56. See Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (97–101) and *Identity and Difference*.

57. The specific reference would be the analysis of representation [*Vorstellung*]

in "Psychology" in *Philosophy of Spirit*, the third volume of the *Encyclopedia* (nos. 451–64); but the question of memory is obviously crucial throughout most of the elaborations at issue here. See Derrida's discussion in "The Pit and the Pyramid" (*Margins*, 76–81).

58. The economy of the Notion is not considered by Derrida in its full complexity there; but Derrida's aims are elsewhere, specifically, the common appurtenance and the closure of the philosophical concepts determining the linguistic field.

59. On Heidegger in this context, see again Derrida's comments in *Of Grammatology* (19–24).

60. One should be careful not to oversimplify the situation, first, in view of the complexity of the concept of language in Hegel or Heidegger, and second, given that for Heidegger, in particular, at issue is the preservation and indeed the return to the language of Greek thought. Conversely, however, these and other factors and nuances do not eliminate the problematic nature of the ensuing historical, theoretical, or political claims, beginning with the claims concerning the very possibility of philosophical language as classically conceived.

61. See Heidegger on logos and ontotheology (*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 97–101) and his discussion in "Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50)" in *Early Greek Thinking*.

62. Simple [einfach] here again refers to the undivided—self-consistent and self-present—whole as discussed earlier.

63. In Marx's own texts, from his earliest work to *Capital* and beyond, the interplay of various economic metaphors is rich and complex. It should not be forgotten that labor, too, is defined by the *investment of energy*, along with the investment of capital. The matrix of the political economy involves, thus, a multiple interplay of all the economic metaphors at issue.

64. Derrida explores these possibilities in his essay "Fors: The English Words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok." The title is a pun on "force." See Barbara Johnson's remarks (64 n.).

65. On the "verkehrte Welt," see Heidegger's rich analysis in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (116–24); Gadamer's "Hegel's Inverted World," in *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*; and Hyppolite's analysis in *Genesis and Structure* (129–39).

Of the American academic philosophical literature, one should mention Robert C. Solomon's discussion, *In the Spirit of Hegel: A Study of G. W. F. Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 376–85; and Pippin's analysis in *Hegel's Idealism* (131–42). Donald Phillip Verene's *Hegel's Recollection* contains a discussion of the concept, giving the historical background. In my view these commentaries do not explore sufficiently the richness of the Hegelian economy, both in its positive and its problematic aspects; but as I cannot consider them in detail here, I shall

not insist on my claims to that effect. The issue does not affect the main points of the present analysis, which again engages a very different economy of relationships among the questions of Hegel, commentary, theory, and history.

On the more “literary” side of the issue, and in proximity to the poststructuralist thematics of the present study, the section is considered, along with other Hegelian metaphors, by Henry Sussman in *The Hegelian Aftermath: Readings in Hegel, Kierkegaard, Freud, Proust, and James* (15–62), which also offers a general discussion of the opening sections of the *Phenomenology* in “the Derridean aftermath,” correctly stressing the progressively increasing complexity of metaphor that shapes Hegel’s analysis. See also Warminski’s comments in *Readings in Interpretation*, which follow but also usefully displace Gadamer’s reading of inversion as conversion (71). I think, however, that such a rendering, in Gadamer in particular but also in general, reduces the critical potential of Hegel’s conception.

66. Warminski’s discussion suggests this as well (*Readings in Interpretation*, 163–79), although his entire agenda of reading proceeds along these lines of aporetic textuality and reading. See Gasché’s Introduction to Warminski’s book, particularly its conclusion.

67. Regarding connections to Leibniz, see Hyppolite’s comments in *Genesis and Structure* (121).

68. Following Hegel and further complicating the temporality, historicity, and intersubjectivity of logic by injecting the unconscious and language—Freud and Saussure—into its economy, Lacan’s contributions was particularly important in this respect.

69. See again Heidegger’s analysis, which is crucial here in relation to Kant (105–12) and in general (112–15).

70. Subject-object terminology is more or less disappearing—and for good reason—from our discussion of these issues, even in relation to Hegel, who, of course, uses these terms. In this respect Heidegger’s role has again been decisive, specifically in *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, where these terms are “buried” by Heidegger’s and Hegel’s own rigor.

71. See Hegel’s discussion (*Phenomenology*, 89; *Werke* 3:119), recasting Newton’s law of contrary forces into the dynamics of mutual solicitation of forces, which can in turn be recast, although far more radically, into a general economy of the complementary play of forces, for example, between classical and deconstructive texts.

## Chapter 5. Continuums

1. The first *Logic*, logically, concludes with the Notion as the Idea’s self-conscious self-comprehension.

2. *The Complete Works of Aristotle* 2:1695, translation modified. My thanks

to Ralph Rosen for retranslating this passage and for most helpful discussions. I extend Hegel's quotation, as indicated by brackets.

3. One must mention here Plato's many elaborations, specifically in Socrates's second speech in *Phaedrus* (245d) and much of *Parmenides*. The discussion of the "physics" and, of course, the meta-physics—and metaphysics—of the soul in *Phaedrus* may be directly related to Socrates's condemnation of writing later in the dialogue, the condemnation that made *Phaedrus* so famous following Derrida's analysis. Both—the physics of the soul as the ultimate continuum and the condemnation of writing as that which inhibits and disrupts continuum—belong to the same theoretical and political *continuum*. This double *logic* extends all the way to Hegel and, then, in his shadow, to modern intellectual history.

4. Kojève offers a more complex economy of relationships between the French Revolution or history in general and the text of the *Phenomenology*, even though it falls well short of being a general economic and complementary matrix of history.

5. See again Derrida's remark, in a more Heideggerian vein, during the discussion following his presentation of "*Différance*": "Yes, there is much of the ancient in what I have said. Everything perhaps. It is to Heraclitus that I refer myself in the last analysis" (*Derrida and Différance*, 93).

6. Kojève engaged in a long and not always unproblematic analysis of it (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 100–49). This analysis influenced the major figures on the French landscape and elsewhere. In many of these developments this influence is combined with that of Heidegger's analysis of temporality in *Being and Time*.

7. See in particular his remark in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (*The Marx-Engels Reader*, 112).

8. Both the first *Logic* and the *Encyclopedia* also close with this economy of the relationship between the meaning of Being in relation to temporality and the final erasure of time in the absolutely continuous becoming, which, once again, defines the closure of history in all Hegel's major works.

9. See Derrida's comments in *Of Grammatology*, 71.

10. See Lukàcs, *The Young Hegel*, and Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*.

11. See Derrida's discussion in "White Mythology," particularly the last section of the essay (*Margins*, 258–71).

12. See in particular important elaborations on pp. 134–38 and in "Space and Dasein's Spatiality" (*Being and Time*, 145–48). The reciprocity of interaction and the mutual constitution of *Dasein* and the world that Heidegger introduces here is similar to, although not as radical as, the quantum mechanical understanding of the interaction between the quantum world and observation—a quantum mechanical *Dasein*, as it were. Multiple traces of Heidegger's analysis in this chapter can be easily found in both Levinas and Lacan. Much of Foucault's project,

particularly his cartographic explorations of the middle period, can be seen as replaying and enacting in the practice of analysis this Heideggerian economy, which Foucault translates into an economy of space and power. In this sense, Foucault's analysis is a curious Deleuzian or post-Deleuzian fusion of Nietzsche's economy of power and force and Heidegger's economy of the "spatial" constitution of *Dasein*, rendered by Foucault in the specific terms of a historiographical analysis. See again Deleuze's discussion in "The New Cartographer" in *Foucault*, which also suggests that Deleuze himself is not only more Hegelian, but also more Heideggerian than he thinks, although, as suggested earlier, he could actually benefit, along different lines, from more Hegel and more Heidegger.

13. For Derrida's relevant discussions see *Of Grammatology* (65–69), on which I shall comment shortly, and an important analysis of Heideggerian spatiality and concepts of the world [Welt] in *Of Spirit*, which proceeds closer to Heidegger (23–30, 47–57).

14. In Minkowski's four-dimensional space, however, the "distances" between events may be interpreted in terms of time elapsed for an object, moving from one of these events to another. See Roger Penrose, *The Emperor's New Mind*, 193–202.

15. Kojève's comments on the issue often relate to Hegel's Jena lectures, in which one encounters different formulations, such as "*Geist ist Zeit*" (Kojève, 138). Kojève also speaks, in the post-Einsteinian spirit, of the four-dimensional *Space* of Nature. Thus the juxtaposition to Kojève at issue here must be qualified. Kojève's reading of the stages of *Geist* and the Notion in the last chapter, however, is again shifted or displaced from Hegel to Marx, and toward a more anthropological understanding of *Geist*. The identification of *Geist* and Man, which is central to Kojève's argument and which he relates to the question of Time in Hegel, is problematic. In Hegel, human existence always remains *temporal*, even *when Geist becomes Absolute Knowledge*, which, however, is very different from saying: "But Hegel also says: '*Geist ist Zeit*.' That is to say, *Man is Time*" (139). Given this inference, Kojève's reading of the end of history in Hegel as the end of humanity, as philosophically defined, becomes logical, since, as we have seen, Hegel suspends time in the end of the *Phenomenology*; but it is problematic nevertheless because it ignores the *Aufhebung*, alongside *Tilgen*, of time and history in Absolute Knowledge.

16. There is the question of the marginalization of all "organic Nature," and specifically the human body—its reduction, along with and as the unconscious, from world history, thus making the latter an objective existence of *Geist* alone. As we have seen earlier, however, this marginalization is also related to the question of the metaphysical opposition between the human (non)animal and all other animals. This question, as Derrida's analysis in "Economimesis" shows, also

looms large in Kant. "Body" is in fact very much Hegel's concern in *The Philosophy of History*, for example, in the question of Indian civilization to be considered below. On that issue, the unconscious margins—theoretical, psychological, or political—of Hegel are immense.

17. I mean here not only the relevant passages and elaborations in the book, similar to those found in the "Logic" and "Philosophy of Nature" in the *Encyclopedia*, or the *History of Philosophy*, but also the grounding excess of mathematical, formal logic—or better, an attempt to exceed the formal logic in the transcendental one that grounds Hegel's project in the first *Logic*. As we have seen, however, the excess of formal logic, necessary as it is, cannot be enacted by means of the transcendental logic, which must itself be deconstructed and exceeded along the way. A general economic "logic," as opposed to Hegel's logic, becomes necessary.

18. The question of Leibniz is obviously of particular interest in this respect, given, in addition to the question of the continuum and differential calculus, the question of relationships between philosophical formalism and mathematical formalism, and Hegel's critique of both.

19. See in particular Hegel's remarks on Newton in *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* 3, 184.

20. The lack of sufficient differentiation of this type is, according to Hegel, the main problem in Spinoza, a point made most directly in the later *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, but transparent throughout Hegel.

21. Bataille cites it as an epigraph to "A Preface to 'Madam Edwarda,'" which is also chapter 7 of *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*. Blanchot elaborates on it in *The Writing of the Disaster*.

The passage is crucial for Heidegger, who specifically discusses it in "The Principles of Thinking," in *The Piety of Thinking*, 51. The term 'thinking' of the title must be taken here in Heidegger's sense as thinking on "the truth of Being." The essay moves decidedly in the Hegelian orbit and, as in other works on Hegel considered earlier, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Hegel's Concept of Experience*, Hegel's experience of consciousness is precomprehended by a fundamental relation to the truth of Being. But the essay never quite departs from Hölderlin, either, with the experience of Being, on the one hand, and of madness, on the other; nothing ever does in Heidegger. The essay, curiously, was published in *Jahrbuch für Psychologie und Psychotherapie* 6 (1958), which suggests that the question of Heidegger and psychoanalysis has yet to be analyzed, very likely interminably. Heidegger, at that juncture, also refers to Novalis—another complex "case."

The Heideggerian economy is quite different from Hegel's, of course, particularly with respect to the relationships between infinity and finitude. These relationships, as Derrida argues in *Speech and Phenomena* (101–2), are in fact mutu-

ally entangled and inhibited in Hegel's text, making Hegel's claims, such as those in the passage at issue here, impossible and requiring instead the economy of closure, as suggested. For both Hegel and Heidegger, however, "death" is both a metaphor for what the true, the best, and the most difficult, thinking—ethical, theoretical, poetical, or whatever—must confront, and for the human confrontation with death.

Blanchot's and Bataille's encounters with the passage also engage this double economy, as does de Man's in a number of texts and elaborations that are relevant here. The passage obviously relates to the question of the economy and rhetoric of temporality as elaborated throughout de Man's texts, together with related discussions in his later essays, on Rousseau, Kant, Hölderlin, and Hegel himself, particularly concerning the question of the sublime, on which I shall comment further below. De Man's essays on Hegel, "Sign and Symbol in Hegel's *Aesthetics*," "Reply to Raymond Geuss," and "Hegel and the Sublime" deal with the *Aesthetics*. But everything in Hegel carries the *Phenomenology* along; and conversely, as again the passage at issue suggests, the *Phenomenology*, in part in the shadow of Kant, from the first to the third critique, is also an "aesthetics," as de Man in fact points out: "Hegel's philosophy . . . , like his *Aesthetics*, is a philosophy of history (and of aesthetics) as well as a history of philosophy (and of aesthetics)" ("Sign and Symbol," 775). De Man is thus also concerned, particularly in "Sign and Symbol," with the question of history, which is one of his major interests throughout his work, despite some appearances, and various claims by his critics, to the contrary. Relating to the same cluster of issues, de Man's concluding elaborations in his late reading of Shelley's *The Triumph of Life* in "Shelley Disfigured" directly relate to the passage at issue. They also anticipate some of de Man's approaches to Hegel in subsequent essays. I shall comment further on these elaborations in the final section of this chapter.

22. Hegel clearly juxtaposes here his economy to Spinoza, a juxtaposition of critical importance throughout the book. These relations do exhibit great conceptual and textual complexity, of course, both with regard to Spinoza's concepts, specifically the differences between earlier and later texts, and Hegel's critique. These issues cannot be addressed here, however. Briefly, Hegel's main target is the separation of duration and thus the continuum from substance in Spinoza. By identifying duration and substance in History and Self-Consciousness in *Geist*, Hegel also aims to resolve the opposition of subject and substance, which is possible only in Absolute Knowledge. It is important to keep in mind the specificity of Hegel's economy of the Subject—*Geist*—that resolves this and other oppositions and enables Hegel to depart from Spinoza or from Schelling, Kant, Leibniz, Descartes, and others.

Duration, however, plays a crucial role in Spinoza, as, for example, Deleuze correctly points out in his post-Nietzschean *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* (39),



using this insight effectively throughout the book, as well as, if differently, in *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, translated as *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*.

23. I shall comment specifically on this economy later in this chapter. It may be stressed here that this economy affects all interpretive processes or, in Derrida's terms, all "writing" at each point, and destroys all local—intensive—continuums, whether as being-presence or becoming-presence. But of course alongside the effects of difference it also *produces* the effects of continuum and presence and their closure.

24. I speak for the moment more in terms of the respective overall philosophies, insofar as they relate to the grounding economies of continuity and rupture, presence and difference, interiority and exteriority. Kant's views and writing on history are a different, if a naturally related issue; and the relations of Kant's to Hegel's economy of history need to be considered separately.

In "The Sign of History" and, most recently, *Heidegger and "the jews,"* Lyotard pursues a Kantian economy of history which he locates closer to Freud and against Hegel. I shall comment on Lyotard's view of history in this book in Chapter 7. More generally, throughout most of his works, Lyotard sees Kant's analysis of the sublime in the third critique as a kind of antidote to Hegelianism, as well as an anticipation of both Nietzsche's insights and, I think more cogently, the Freudian economy of the unconscious. It is true that, as Lyotard's approaches to Kant and deconstructive and poststructuralist readings of both Rousseau and Hegel show, the economy of the sublime in these and other authors has a great dislocating and deconstructive potential. Its continual threat to the continuum is a major point and a major worry for Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and much of the metaphysics of presence. It also offers major foreshadowings of some crucial aspects of the unconscious in Freud, Lacan, and Derrida, and the general economic vision, particularly in Nietzsche and Bataille.

I do not think that what Kant has to offer in this respect is sufficient to constitute an economy, such as general economy, which would be required at this point in the history of our understanding of these issues. Freud's and especially Nietzsche's theories are much more radical and radically exceed any Kantian or Hegelian economy. Lyotard's own matrix is in turn not unproblematic in part by virtue of the economy of its relation to the text of philosophy, and specifically Kant. Lyotard may well need more Hegel—but a certain aspect of Hegel. Nor do the classical economies of the sublime quite describe or approach the possibilities of "experience," if one can use that term, which general economy engages—let us say, the Dionysian possibilities, which are profoundly and at every level improper to philosophy. Rousseau does, it is true, come quite close at times; in this sense, he is much closer to de Sade than he would perhaps want to be. Nietzsche may have

sensed this uncanny proximity to the Dionysian in Rousseau—one of his great enemies—as did Bataille and Derrida and very likely de Sade himself.

25. For Derrida on engraving, see in particular the section “The Engraving and the Ambiguity of Formalism” in *Of Grammatology* (200–15); for his reflections on Rousseau as *writer*, see almost the entire book.

26. Here again I am concerned mainly with the underlying model of the continuum in Rousseau, rather than with proximities and distances between Hegel’s and Rousseau’s views of history as such—for example, the role, obviously very important, of Rousseau’s *Social Contract* or *Second Discourse* in the development of Hegel’s ideas; or many other connections between both thinkers, in part again through Kant.

27. The scope of this intertextuality is clear from de Man’s essay, accompanying essays by Derrida and J. Hillis Miller in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, the collection in which “Shelley Disfigured” was originally published, as well as many other studies of the poem that could be cited.

28. At this point a reference to Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Reverie* is due. Although this work cannot be taken up here, along with his *Poetics of Space* it offers fruitful connections to several junctures of this chapter. In effect, Bachelard’s conception of reveries, while it is finally closer to Hegel, suggests interesting possibilities for complementary economies of continuities and breaks.

It should also be qualified, lest there be misunderstanding, that the present analysis of Rousseau’s “continuum” concerns itself with the significance of a particular model, but does not imply that all Rousseauistic experiences are subjected to this model alone. Beyond the experience of “reverie,” there is a class of experience that is governed by a continuum utopia of various kinds, specifically the “saddened, *negative*, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauistic side” of the economy of play that Derrida juxtaposes to Nietzschean affirmation in the context of Lévi-Strauss (*Writing and Difference*, 292; *L’Écriture et la différence*, 427). Rousseau, however, also pursues a different, indeed opposing mode—the experience of the ultimate rupture—the experience of the sublime that “makes madness beautiful,” to which Byron’s lines just cited and Shelley’s *The Triumph of Life*, refer, specifically with *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in mind. Juxtaposed and played against, and thus indissociable from, even complementary to, the continuum, this side of Rousseau’s vision may be seen as more ironic in de Man’s sense, indeed precisely at the limits of irony bordering on madness.

It is important that, while within different economies, in Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel, the sublime has a complex relation, itself both conscious and unconscious, to consciousness and self-consciousness, which is extended and further stratified in Freudian and Lacanian economies, or still more general economically, in Nietzsche, Bataille, and Derrida.

This side of Rousseau has been a major focus of most of de Man's work on Rousseau and, in some measure, continuing this program in general on Hegel as well. It is already pronounced in de Man's earlier "Intentional Structure of the Romantic Images," where it is combined both with Wordsworth's economy of the sublime in *The Prelude* and with Hölderlin and where de Man in fact invokes the Fifth *Rêverie* toward the end (*The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, 16). The essay was originally published in English in 1968 in *Romanticism and Consciousness*, one of the most influential collections in Romantic studies, which in great measure centers on Rousseau. De Man continues to explore these thematics throughout his writing on Rousseau, particularly in *Allegories of Reading* and his exchanges on Rousseau with Derrida.

The analysis of such experiences of irony and rupture are, as we have seen, also found in Hegel, of course, undoubtedly again partly as a response to both Rousseau and Kant on the sublime, as de Man's writing on Hegel, among that by other critics, would point out. In fact, one of my points here is that *Geist*, particularly as Absolute Knowledge, is not only a continuum, but is also a continuum of the overcoming of rupture, indeed the infinite rupture—the Hegelian sacrifice—or more precisely that which from any human perspective should be seen as an immense, indeed infinite rupture.

At the human level of experience, the *continuous* synthesis of continuity and rupture can never be achieved. It can only be approached in Hegel and Rousseau alike, although both the continuum and rupture are differently grounded—in consciousness in Hegel and in the unconscious in Rousseau. But by the same token, Rousseau and Hegel must inscribe this rupture, making it possible to deconstruct either text; to read dialectic as the allegory of the discontinuous and to locate various forms of the rhetoric of temporality in such texts, as de Man does; or to show the operation of the general economic forces—radical loss in presentation, irreducible alterity, *différance*, writing, and so forth—in their texts, as Derrida does. In this respect, Derrida's reading is more deconstructive and, in my view, more cogent than de Man's, for whom analytical thematization of various textual modes and tropes is a major concern, similarly to Derrida's reading of more literary figures, such as, in particular, Mallarmé or Blanchot.

29. The history of writing and the history of the road, the connection that *breaks* and *inscribes*, *writes over*, the *ground* of geography, or history, or memory, are *connected* by Derrida. In fact he repeats the formulation both in *Of Grammatology* (107) and "Freud and the Scene of Writing" (*Writing and Difference*, 214).

30. Indeed, Cuvier's "catastrophe theory"—let us say, of evolution or life—punctuated by enormous breaks on a cosmic scale, is suggestive of the overcoming and the regenerative capacity of *Geist* as Hegel conceives it, especially at the closing of the *Phenomenology*, through the economy of sacrifice.

31. It also establishes the metaphysics of successivity and thus the linearity of temporality, particularly conscious temporality, from Aristotle to Heidegger, whose deconstruction cannot proceed by “complicating the structure of time while conserving its homogeneity and its fundamental successivity” (*Of Grammatology*, 67; *De la grammatologie*, 97), but must engage the radical unconscious, as Derrida in fact argues at the same juncture, invoking a very different Freudian (extra)temporality, which dislocates all full linearity, successivity, and other metaphysical structures. But such an unconscious must in turn be figured in the deconstructed field, as opposed to Rousseau’s economy of the unconscious, among others.

32. I use the term “interval” here in a sense opposite to Derrida’s in the passage cited above, and elsewhere in *Of Grammatology* and other works, where it connotes interruption or the hinge structured by *différance*.

33. Let me stress that I refer here only to the ideal continuity of Absolute Knowledge. Hegel, as I have argued throughout, understood the power and the complexity of inhibition in any actual experience, as his analysis of all major structures of consciousness and self-consciousness shows—for example, the analysis of desire in the *Phenomenology* or, in more formal terms, the analysis of force as considered earlier. All these factors make *Geist*’s task all the more difficult and momentous. At the same time, however, this model, of which Absolute Knowledge is the ideal realization, remains a grounding model, controlling the analysis of everything, including various complications at issue, and making the whole matrix a restricted economy. In this respect, the shadow of Hegel—or Aristotle—extends well beyond utopian thinking, across a wide spectrum of theories and fields—philosophy, particularly Husserl’s phenomenology; psychological and psychoanalytic theories; and political and social theories.

34. Here again Deleuze and Guattari’s economy of schizophrenia would be the most powerful recent example.

35. Interestingly enough, that statement is preceded almost immediately, in the context of “matter” that “will not surely move itself,” by a reference to “the carpenter’s act” that “must act upon it [matter],” next to “the menstrual fluid” and “the earth” upon both of which “the seeds and semen” “must act,” for neither matter nor earth nor menstrual fluid “set themselves in motion” (1071b). The order of the three beds in the *Republic*—the artist’s, the carpenter’s, and God’s—has thus more, many more than three orders; and there is likewise much more to all motions invoked by Aristotle: all these things move according to a very different order, or neither order nor chaos.

36. In general, Blake is one of the major figures of Bataille’s vision. See his essay on Blake in *Literature and Evil*, as well as scattered remarks throughout his works.

37. This experience is quite different from Hegel’s or Kant’s or Rousseau’s

sublime as indicated earlier, all of which involve complex relations, both conscious and unconscious, to consciousness and self-consciousness. The experience at issue at the moment is construed by Hegel as suspending all consciousness altogether.

38. That, as we have seen, was already a problem for Newton, analyzed in Alexandre Koyré's "The Significance of the Newtonian Synthesis," in *Newtonian Studies*.

39. In this respect, Kant's analysis of the dynamically sublime of Nature in the third critique is of considerable interest. It may well have been on Hegel's mind when he wrote the passage just cited. This analysis offers interesting critical possibilities, explored both by Lyotard's analysis and by de Man in "Phenomenality and Materiality in Kant."

40. I consider Althusser's economy in detail in *Reconfigurations* (273–95).

41. On the concept of the furtive, see also Derrida's reading of Artaud (*Writing and Difference*, 175–78), whose work, in general, is an important text and context, or intertext, here.

42. There is, perhaps deliberately, a line of political and revolutionary or "resistance" metaphors in juxtaposing this "night of secret difference" to "the breaking of secrecy" and "collaboration"—almost a betrayal—of philosophy. The very term "opposition" belongs to these fields as well.

43. It is worth pointing out that, similarly to history, de Man, in the essay, sees the event of language as the event of disfiguration, the event of devastation of life and thought—life of thought and life as thought—for example, dialectical thought as in Hegel, or ontological through or, in later works, a thinking-poetizing on the truth of Being, in Heidegger. De Man's economy of history and language interactively is thus different, even radically different, from Heidegger's, in spite of their fundamental proximity along other lines. To this economy of proximity-distance the three approaches—Hegel's, Heidegger's, and de Man's—offer a powerful testimony. The proximities are irreducible. But the displacements are radical, too.

The displacement or distance from Hegel and Heidegger, however, also leads to a rereading—via deconstruction, writing, reading—of Hölderlin against Heidegger's reading and a Hegelian reading, to which Heidegger already juxtaposes his reading of Hölderlin. Warminski's readings of Hölderlin, Hegel, and Heidegger in *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger*, cited earlier, may in fact be seen as an attempt to explore the "space" or *différance* of this difference, by means of deManian or post-deManian strategies of rhetorical reading.

The distance is also conditioned by this re-reading that has a longer history in de Man, certainly well before any deconstruction. Many of de Man's readings, as reading and as theory, may be seen as a vertigo of violent oscillations between a Hegelian vision of consciousness and self-consciousness and Hölderlin's final

madness. The latter may or may not have been related to the limit of thinking of which Heidegger speaks, bearing both Hölderlin and Nietzsche in mind. But it could be read in relation to the question of the limit of self-consciousness—the profoundly Hegelian, and Hegel’s, question. As we recall, according to de Man in “The Rhetoric of Temporality,” the supreme irony is the consciousness of madness.

We recall that Hegel, too, also thinking of Hölderlin, believed himself going mad while writing the *Phenomenology*. Hegel thus has, or could be read as having, experienced this vertigo of enormous—infinite—and violent oscillations.

This is the vertiginous abyss of self-consciousness, of which critics spoke a great deal in relation to deconstruction, particularly at the time of its appearance on the scene of criticism and theory. To some extent, this abyss may in the end be more closely aligned with de Man’s thinking, although the abyss is by no means absent in Derrida, where it takes, I think, a different form, as do Derrida’s proximities and distances to Hegel, Heidegger, and Nietzsche. Hölderlin is not Derrida’s main text, certainly not to the extent it is for de Man, which difference is worth noting. The case of Hölderlin figured largely on the contemporary French scene, particularly in the work of Foucault and Blanchot. Derrida invokes Hölderlin in relation to the question of madness, first in his essay on Artaud (*Writing and Difference*, 169–74) and then in *Memoires for Paul de Man*, where he speaks of Hölderlin, Rousseau, and Nietzsche, as “the three madmen of Western modernity,” “extraordinary cases,” while pointing out, however, that Hölderlin is de Man’s “identification” and not his own (*Memoires*, 128). There is, as I have indicated, perhaps another vertiginous abyss—that of infinitesimal proximity and infinite distance, and in addition, the abyss of oscillations between these, between Derrida and de Man.

44. It must be kept in mind, of course, that both the systemic aspects of the Saussurean scheme, such as the synchronic, and the historical aspects, such as the diachronic, can be set against each other in Saussure’s text, or against metaphysics and Hegelianism. If, however, one were to take on metaphysics and Hegelianism in this fashion, it is important to keep in mind that this oppositional move will affect both historical and systemic dimensions. One should not simply identify system and synchrony, or history and diachrony, in Saussure. These are related but not identical aspects of Saussurean linguistics. Nor can one simply or unequivocally relate the scientificity of linguistics in Saussure to either systematization or synchrony. This is the reason why I refer to the historical and diachronic aspect in Saussure’s project as a whole, including its scientific ambitions and character. In Hegel, of course, scientificity is inconceivable without historicity, although it cannot be reduced to it, either.

45. It is worth stressing that, no less than difference, presence must be refigured general economically. Strategically, however, for a variety of historical and theo-

retical reasons, the term ‘difference’ offers greater deconstructive and general economic resources.

46. The history of legal theory and practice has always been profoundly related to philosophy, even though, particularly as practice, it could never be fully determined by philosophy. A rich field of studies has in fact developed in recent decades around the relationships between legal theory and the question of interpretation, including deconstruction.

47. A reference to modern physics and cosmology is again due here, now even more than at the time of Derrida’s writing (1967). The issue, as we have seen, has been in the margins of modern philosophy, including in Husserl and Heidegger. But then again, that was Kant’s major concern, too, in many ways even a starting point. More generally, the whole “Second Division: Transcendental Dialectic” of *The Critique of Judgement* is extremely pertinent here; and it has shaped much of Husserl’s and Heidegger’s thinking.

## Chapter 6. The Whole and Its Parts

1. See Gasché’s analysis in *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection*, which centers on Hegel’s earlier *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy* and considers “the philosophy of reflection” in great detail (13–78).

2. Here, again, Hegel’s economy of “the Ground” as the unity of identity and difference in both *Logics* becomes decisive.

3. See again the conclusions of “Différance” and “Ousia and Grammē.”

4. Here again Hegel’s “philosophy of mathematics,” developed in the first *Logic*, and other considerations of limit, finitude, and related issues are an important background in this context.

5. Anticipating, even by its very title, Derrida, Lacan’s essay, “The Deconstruction of the Drive” (1964), and related writings can be mentioned in this context because of the topological themes and metaphors they engage and their references to differential calculus. See, in particular, his remarks in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, 170–72. In part via these metaphors Lacan develops a fundamentally related general problematics. “The deconstruction of the drive” may also be read—or *written*—as a deconstruction of *Geist*, of the *Geist-Trieb*, which overcomes the death-drive via sacrifice.

6. The latter have often been eclipsed in the subsequent history of reading Hegel, which has dwelled more on the *Phenomenology* than the *Encyclopedia*.

7. Schelling seems the most likely author, influenced by Hölderlin. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy’s “grammatological” analysis of German Romanticism in *The Literary Absolute* opens with this “enigmatic text” (27).

8. See Heidegger’s discussion in *Schelling’s Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, 23–24. Although important in a number of ways, this discussion is also

misleading, certainly with respect to Nietzsche and his critique of “the will to a system,” specifically the following statements on which Heidegger comments directly: “I mistrust all systematizers and I avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity” (from *Twilight of the Idols*) and “The will to a system: for a philosopher morally speaking a finer decadence, a sickness of character;—immorally speaking his will to appear more stupid than he is—more stupid, that means: stronger, simpler, more imperious, less cultured, more commanding, more tyrannical.” Heidegger points out “that Nietzsche says of himself that he is not limited enough for a system,” but concludes by saying that “It could be that renunciation of system is necessary now; but not because the system is in itself something impossible or empty, but on the contrary because it is the highest and essential thing. And this is indeed Nietzsche’s innermost conviction” (*Schelling’s Treatise*, 23–24; *Schellings Abhandlung Über das Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit*, 28–29; translation modified).

These propositions may well be consistent with Heidegger but hardly with Nietzsche. To speak of the “surface” of the text, in the letter and perhaps spirit of this textual surface, Nietzsche knew what is possible or not, empty or not, about the system and how to differentiate between them. “The highest and essential thing?” Here perhaps, once again, “the virulence of Nietzsche’s thought cannot be more completely misunderstood” (*Of Grammatology*, 19; *De la grammatologie*, 32), certainly as concerns what transpires in the brilliant and profound formulations that Heidegger cites.

9. Heidegger’s encounter with the Introduction in *Hegel’s Concept of Experience* demonstrates this complexity. For the textual nuances of this encounter, see Warminski’s *Readings in Interpretation*, 112–62.

10. The English translation of the extended passage, while reinforcing the model of the realization of the potential that is already there, is imprecise, speaking for example of World-History as “the exhibition [Darstellung] of Spirit in the process of working out the knowledge of that which it is potentially” (17–19). Leaving aside the complexities of “Darstellung”—representation, or even in this context, putting itself forward in representation—Hegel here—“sie die Darstellung des Geistes sei, wie er sich das Wissen dessen, was er an sich ist, erarbeitet” (*Werke* 12:30–31)—speaks rather of *Geist* working out the knowledge of what it is; and given the complexity of the Hegelian economy of being as becoming and the economy of Hegelian *Darstellung*, these passages likewise suggest instead the interpretation developed in the present analysis. H. B. Nisbet’s more recent translation of a different version of the Introduction, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction* is more precise in this respect. We must, of course, confront throughout the problem of (re)constructing Hegel’s texts, particularly when his various lectures are at issue, which affects both their



macro-economy and micro-economy, such as the structure of his specific metaphors.

11. *The Legend of Freud*, 39. Weber shows that all Freud can do is to offer, in the terms of this study, a complementary analysis and descriptions, or inscriptions. In both Weber and Derrida, particularly in *The Post Card*, the emphasis remains on undecidability and aporias between or among Freud's terms and concepts. But the richness and effectiveness of Freud's complementary conjunction is no less remarkable and is perhaps the more decisive factor in Freud's theories.

12. The strength of Gasché's analysis in *The Tain of the Mirror* lies in showing the impossibility of sustaining philosophical reflexivity even within the limits of philosophy and "inside" its text. In this respect, his analysis is both strictly deconstructive and strictly contained within the philosophical limits, even though, as I have suggested, it thereby also limits Derrida's deconstruction and represses wider, specifically "unconscious," margins and supplements of the self-reflexive in Derrida and in general. This repression takes place partly by design. But there are also always forces—the unconscious—at work in any given design. At certain points the strategy becomes problematic under all conditions; and in my assessment, Gasché's analysis at its best does not require it.

13. The question of exemplarity has played a prominent role in and in the wake of deconstruction. For Derrida's early approach see the opening discussion in "La parole soufflée" (*Writing and Difference*, 169–74). The problematics can be traced throughout Derrida's texts, most recently in "Passions: 'An Oblique Offering'" (*Derrida: A Critical Reader*, 15). See also Gasché's "God, for Example," Gregory Ulmer's *Applied Grammatology*, Warminski's *Readings in Interpretation*, and Irene Harvey's "Derrida and the Issues of Exemplarity."

14. Specifically on concerns with reflexivity, see the collection edited by Steve Woolgar, *Knowledge and Reflexivity: New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge*; and for the overall view of the history and the current state of debate in the field of modern or postmodern sociology of scientific knowledge, see again *Science as Practice and Culture*, edited by Andrew Pickering.

15. In this sense the function of transference and counter-transference in psychoanalysis and its restricted and general economies, specifically in Freud and Lacan, would obviously be another related and highly pertinent concern. I cannot address this question here, but the whole analysis and many references in this and the next chapter would suggest a general approach, in part precisely by means of deconstructing the possibility of fully containing such economies, whether conceived by means of or as controlled by consciousness or by the unconscious, or, as they in fact always must be, as interactively—complementarily—both.

16. This critique can in fact be applied to a number of approaches in the history and sociology of science, just referred to, where the lack of the unconscious, broadly—and general economically—understood, often undermines the force of analysis. “Freud” is the name most missing in the field. I mean by this statement that the name of the problem—the problem of the unconscious—connotes the necessity of accounting for the effects of the unconscious under whatever name.

17. That, in turn, is not to say that there is no debate—mathematical, meta-mathematical, philosophical, or political—concerning these issues, in particular the question of infinitude, one of the major issues in the modern debate in mathematical logic, and indeed throughout the history of mathematics, beginning with Euclid or even Parmenides and Zeno. On some of these issues see two recent works by Brian Rotman—*Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero* and *Ad infinitum*.

18. No less than Hegel’s, the rigor of Parmenidean logic with which Plato, in *Parmenides*, argues the necessity of the one as against transformation and the many is immense. This logic suggests in fact, against itself, that neither position can be “logically” maintained. Nietzsche was the first to grasp this point in his rereading of Heraclitus through the idea of play in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*.

19. See the analysis in *The Post Card*, 262–66.

20. This is actually an aspect of Socrates’s attack on writing that Derrida does not consider. Derrida *deconstructs* Socrates’s attempts to ground “understanding” in *presence*, while it follows, in contradiction to Socrates, that understanding requires perhaps *more writing* than was ever dreamed of by philosophy—before, by, or after Socrates.

21. Both the strengths and the problems of Deleuze and Guattari’s analysis of schizophrenia in *Anti-Oedipus* may be productively engaged along these lines as well.

## Chapter 7. History as Complementarity

1. This transformation can be traced in most writings on these authors in the late 1980s. One could also cite a number studies, articles, and collections specifically concerned with the role of historical thematics in these authors and their interface with more directly historical projects, or rather projects more customarily seen as historical—such as Marxist, Foucauldian, or Bakhtinian, or historically oriented projects in cultural studies, feminist and gender studies, race studies, and colonial and postcolonial studies. See, in particular, the essays collected in *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*, edited by Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington, and Robert Young.

2. This change is clearly reflected by most recent books on Nietzsche, including some among those mentioned earlier in this study. It is particularly noticeable in

the United States since the mid-1980s; and it is, as I have indicated, a part of the general transformation of the intellectual landscape in the wake of postmodernism and poststructuralism. Traditional views, whether Anglo-American or Continental, on Nietzsche or in literature on the question of history engaging or referring to Nietzsche, also offer a complex landscape. Certainly, Heidegger has always understood the significance of Nietzsche as a historical thinker, however problematic his views on both Nietzsche and history may be at times.

3. I refer especially to "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*. As indicated earlier, Foucauldian practice may itself be seen as a fusion of Nietzsche and Heidegger; and Heidegger, as Foucault acknowledges, was in turn a thinker of major importance for him.

4. His discussion of Anaxagoras and *noas* as a kind of historical process in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* may serve as an example here. It may be an example of a somewhat abstract type, but Anaxagoras's *noas* is also one of the starting points of Hegel's meditation on history, as Hegel reminds us in his *Philosophy of History* (*Werke* 12:529), a reference possibly familiar to Nietzsche.

5. Derrida even suggests that this detour could be necessary in order both to surpass Heidegger's reading and to approach Nietzsche in general (*Of Grammatology*, 19–20). This economy of reading in Derrida may be seen as metaphorized through a Freudian detour, which is a persistent model in Derrida.

6. For a discussion of specific structures of metaphorical transfer in Freud and the problems arising there, see Samuel Weber's *The Legend of Freud*, particularly 167–68. In Derrida, it is *The Post Card* that engages perhaps his richest textual analysis of different levels of Freud's discourse.

7. Lyotard's analysis in *Heidegger and "the jews,"* steeped in Freudian and post-Freudian—here particularly Derridean or again post-Derridean—machinery, engages these issues and models, thus using Freud's model of the history of Judaism to *analyze* the case of "Heidegger and 'the jews'" (21, 81).

8. The conceptual or conceptual-historical drift of this particular volume of Bloom, let me note briefly here, is interesting in the present context. The first two theoretical parts are, after some discussion of the Kabbalah in the Introduction, framed by Freud's primal scene, which is set in the context of Nietzsche and Derrida. Bloom's reading of Browning's *Childe Roland* follows, almost ending with Hegel and the conclusion of the *Phenomenology*, the sacrifice and history read, predictably, as "essentially the influence process," against which, however, Bloom "set[s] . . . Kierkegaard's essential insights" on "repetition," which is "better than Nietzsche's eternal return of the Same" (120–21). The last, incidentally, is Heidegger's rendering: Nietzsche speaks only of eternal recurrence. Malarmé and de Man, to whom the book is dedicated, are also inserted in between. In the second part, "Using the Map," Bloom departs from the European or Continental scene of writing to Milton and the shadow of Milton, and then to

Emerson and his shadow and “the shadows of shadows” on the American scene of poetry, the *American* sublime, which is again juxtaposed, via Emerson’s “re-centering,” to “de-centering, as Nietzsche had, and as Derrida and de Man are brilliantly accomplishing” (176).

9. Again, see Derrida’s analysis in *The Post Card* (263–73) and *Mes Chances*.

10. See Gerald Edelman, *Neural Darwinism* and, more recent, *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind*. For a popular exposition and further references, see Israel Rosenfield, *The Invention of Memory*.

11. The last sentence may conceivably refer to what Nietzsche sets as a task for himself.

12. See his well-known comment in *Inner Experience* (109).

13. See *The Will to Power*, on the tragic (449–51) and the critique of Kant, and the discussion throughout in the *Genealogy* and *Twilight* and most later works.

14. Harold Bloom’s “anxiety of influence,” insisting “on poetic strength,” proceeds along these lines. It is therefore at least as Nietzschean as Freudian; and Bloom often speaks of the Nietzschean *genealogy* of his genealogy of poetic morals—the anxiety of influence.

15. See also important remarks in *Glas*, particularly on repression and dialectical “thinking” (191a).

16. The literature on the issue is by now extensive and persistent. Derrida’s other major essay devoted to the question of metaphor, in addition to “White Mythology” (in *Margins*) is “The *Retrait* of Metaphor”; and the works on or related to Nietzsche are numerous, some of which have been cited earlier. Even more persistent are the effects, in many areas and fields, of the theoretical elaboration of the question of metaphor, which cannot be restricted to Nietzsche or deconstruction. A representative collection of the essays on the subject is *On Metaphor*, edited by Sheldon Sacks. In the field of historical studies, Hayden White’s books, such as *Metahistory* and *Tropics of Discourse*, are doubtless best known; they are also problematic, especially in relation to the classical conception of metaphor on which they rely and which they often juxtapose to Nietzsche’s and Derrida’s.

17. “Uncircumventable,” let us recall, is the term used by Derrida in relation to “Heidegger’s meditation” (*Margins*, 22), but which is just as applicable to Freud, certainly for Derrida, whose project, as I have suggested, joins both.

18. Derrida’s analysis in *Of Grammatology* (60–65), complementing his critique of Husserl in *Speech and Phenomena*, is extremely important here.

19. See also “Différance” (*Margins*, 10–13).

20. In this context, Derrida’s early (1964) analysis of the relationships between desire and the eye, and in effect the gaze, in Levinas and Hegel (*Writing and Difference*, 99–100) and its proximities to—and distances from—Lacan are of particular interest, especially in view of Lacan’s own proximities to and distances

from Hegel, and possibly Levinas as well, in the latter case particularly on the question of the Other [l'autrui].

This is not the place to consider the relationships between Lacan and Derrida and the debates surrounding them, including the debates between Lacan and Derrida themselves. It may be suggested that, in spite of Derrida's explanations in *Positions* and elsewhere, Lacan is a name conspicuous by its absence in "Différance," where Derrida lists such precursors or—using them as the names of the problems and of manifestation of the operation of *différance*—components of the Derridean economy, such as Nietzsche, Saussure, Freud, Heidegger, Bataille, Levinas, and several others. It may be that, while Lacan's contribution or "influence" was not as great as Lacan would claim, it was much greater than Derrida was willing to acknowledge at that point. Certainly the very fusion of Freud and Saussure, which is central to Derrida's matrix, was introduced by Lacan, even though Derrida's deconstructive refiguration of this fusion by means of *writing* is an advance and contribution of great originality and significance. Subsequent interactions and mutual borrowing are a still more complex case. Late, post-Derridean, Lacan is often quite reminiscent of Derrida.

21. Along the Marxist lines, an early and in many ways paradigmatic example of that type would be Michael Ryan's *Marxism and Deconstruction*. But, in one degree or another, the strategy at issue is persistent throughout recent literature; and it has by now have been effectively criticized as well, including by more critically informed Marxist commentators.

22. For the recent attempt of that type to "re-constellate," in my view without much success, the confronting discourses of modernity and postmodernity, and in particular Habermas and Derrida, see Bernstein's *The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity*.

23. See, for example, Gayatri Spivak's "Speculations on Reading Derrida: After Reading Marx" (in *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*) and *In Other Worlds*.

24. Lyotard's analysis in *Heidegger and "the jews"* is an interesting exploration of some of the effects of this economy in the sociocultural field, although the historical model or paradigm itself employed by Lyotard is finally not as radical as it could be. It remains too close to Freud—to Freud on history, and even, let us say, to a certain Kantian Freud, as opposed to more general economic possibilities suggested by Nietzsche, Bataille, Derrida, or other relevant frameworks at issue in the present study. As indicated earlier, however, the juncture of the Kantian sublime and Freud is an interesting point, specifically in its juxtaposition to the Hegelian economy of history or in general. On Kant and history, see also Lyotard's "The Sign of History" (in *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*).

25. In fact this deconstruction and the general economy of history it entails may be seen as a key opening move in *Of Grammatology* (3–5, 27–29), it is instru-

mental for both Derrida's project and grammatology as "science." See also an important discussion later in the book (285–87) and related elaborations throughout *Positions* and other early texts.

26. See also his related remarks on the difference between "differentiation" and *différance* (13–14), which is again the difference between controlled and uncontrolled—or rather, controlled-uncontrolled, complementary—transformations, and thus between restricted and general economies.

27. See, for example, Spivak's remarks on that issue, made around 1974, in *Of Grammatology*, lxi–lxii.

28. The question of the relationships between Marxism, or post-Marxism, and deconstruction has been the subject of what is by now a more than twenty-year debate and has acquired a long bibliography, which would include many works and collections referred to by the present study. The subject could easily take up a separate study. I have commented on the issue more specifically in *Reconfigurations*.

29. See also Derrida's elaborations on negative theology in "Différance" (*Margins*, 6–7).

30. The list of literature along virtually any line of exploration would be long. The related thematics—memory, forgetting, history—continuously reemerge, particularly, beyond Freud and Lacan, around Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida and De Man; and these themes may be traced in many of the works referred to by this study. But this list still may not be long enough, and the complementarity matrix suggests some new possibilities as well. Among recent works stressing the possibilities at issue, see, for example, Dominick LaCapra's essay on Freud, "History and Psychoanalysis" (in *The Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis*); Marian Hobson's "History Traces" (in *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*); or again Lyotard's and Samuel Weber's work, cited earlier. Along more Derridean or post-Derridean lines, see also Gregory Ulmer's *Teletheory: Grammatology in the Age of Video*, particularly Part Two (115–208), and David Farrell Krell's *Of Memory, Reminiscence and Writing: On the Verge*. The latter study offers an extensive perusal of the theme of memory in the post-Derridean landscape, although, in my view, it is much closer to Heidegger, in a certain reading, than to Derrida. Krell's study does not explore the more radical, more general economic, possibilities offered by the landscape at issue. In fact, while devoting much of its space to the question of temporality, the book might be seen as a repression of historicity, in part again by displacing it into the Heideggerian register, or a certain Heideggerian register. Krell's analysis proceeds well outside the register of general economy, although there are some insubstantial references to Bataille and "Derrida's . . . debt to Bataille" (335 n. 19).

Another relevant study that may be cited here and that deals more directly and extensively with the question of history is Hans Kellner's *Language and Historical*

*Representation: Getting the Story Crooked.* Kellner offers a suggestive overview of a number of works in the field of history itself. In the last chapter, "Narrativity and History: Structuralism and Since," Kellner makes cogent and suggestive summary remarks on the potential implications of the poststructuralist, and specifically Derrida's, analysis, for the question of history. He does not develop these themes, however, or sufficiently discriminate between different models of history emerging in the poststructuralist landscape, such as, in particular, between Derrida's and Ricoeur's. These differences, as I stressed, are often decisive. Ricoeur's economy of history would have to be seen as particularly problematic from the perspective of the present analysis.

31. I say "analogous" because such *differends* are only one type among the effects of the general economy; and the latter may not be Lyotard's economy of history. The "vision" of the historical and political as heterogeneous, however, that emerges in *The Differend* has an interesting critical potential, even if not always utilized by Lyotard himself. One might also want to account for multiple *differends* even within a given perspective.

32. These remarks, interestingly, are made by Nietzsche in the context of physics and atomism.

33. This statement is made with the preceding analysis of Hegel in mind and does not aim to reduce the complexity of the Hegelian economy.

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# INDEX

*Note:* Some subentries—including those for such main figures as Bataille, Derrida, Freud, Hegel, Heidegger, and Nietzsche and such concepts as *Geist*, “complementarity,” “history,” and “the unconscious”—are indexed under “*key discussions*,” with corresponding chapters indicated in parentheses. In the main analysis of Hegel, Chapters 4 to 6 (pp. 150–325), Hegel’s concepts of *consciousness*, *self-consciousness*, and *history* are discussed extensively. All works discussed and referred to in the book are listed in the bibliography (pp. 455–75).

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